

Elementary English

A Magazine of the Language Arts

APRIL 1969

READING



WRITING



SPEAKING



LISTENING



SPELLING



ENGLISH USAGE



CHILDREN'S BOOKS



RADIO AND
TELEVISION



AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS



POETRY



CREATIVE
WRITING

CADDIE WOODLAWN
INDIVIDUALIZED READING
SPELLING
HANDWRITING



From *Little Brother, No More.*
By Robert Benton. Knopf.

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APRIL, 1960

No. 4

RUTH M. HADLOW

Caddie Woodlawn

"Please tell me a story about when you were little." Many children have made this plea to mother, father, grandparent, or other adult. The occasion was made more memorable if the adult had a gift for storytelling. Carol Ryrie Brink was fortunate indeed to have had her little girl's plea so competently answered by Grandmother that in later years Gram's stories of her pioneer childhood in Wisconsin as a girl named Caddie Woodhouse formed the basis for an award-winning book—*Caddie Woodlawn*.

In the winter of 1933 Mrs. Brink was in France with her children and her husband, who was on leave from his professorship at the University of Minnesota. Having written some poems and short stories and a children's book called *Anything Can Happen on The River*, she was now looking about for material for another book. Then one day she received a letter from Gram, who was living in Idaho. Enclosed with the letter was a newspaper clipping telling of the death of Indian John of Wisconsin, who was said to

be 110 years old. Gram remarked that she was sure this was the Indian John of the stories she used to tell Carol many years ago. This reference set off a chain of happy memories of Gram's stories of

her childhood. Why not share these "remembered yesterdays" with children of today? Letters bursting with questions and answers traveled back and forth between France and the U.S.A. Mrs. Brink wanted details about what clothes were worn in pioneer Wisconsin, what foods were eaten, what games were played, what the schools were like. Gram proved an almost endless source of information.



Mrs. Brink

In the spring, when the Brinks returned to Minnesota, Mrs. Brink decided to visit the scene of her grandmother's girlhood years. Gram gave directions to the farm but, since Mrs. Brink and her husband felt that, after almost seventy years, it would be almost impossible to rely on these, they consulted town records and the local mail carrier. Imagine their sur-

Miss Hadlow is assistant supervisor of work with children in the Cleveland Public Library.

prise when they found that Gram's directions were accurate, even to the bend in the road.

At the old Woodhouse farm the Brinks explored field, forest, river, and lake. They talked with some of the old inhabitants of the area, and as Mrs. Brink later stated, "... the more I talked with them the more convinced I became that we (were) about to lose a most precious contact with something which has vanished."

When Mrs. Brink began her book she found that she had to weigh and weed and winnow the great harvest of material she had gathered. Deciding on a plot, she found then that her incidents fell into place easily. The manuscript was tested on her son and daughter, who gave their hearty approval. Off it went to the Mac-

millan Company, who in 1935 issued it as a full-fledged printed volume. Received enthusiastically not only by teachers and librarians but more importantly by the children themselves, *Caddie Woodlawn*

was awarded the Newbery Medal by the American Library Association as the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children in the year of its publication.

Just what is this story that is a favorite today not only with English-speaking children but also with boys and girls of many other tongues? It is primarily the perceptive story of the growing up of a lovable tomboy; it is also an engaging family story and an informative frontier story.

In 1864 Caddie Woodlawn was eleven, and as wild a little tomboy as ever ran the woods of western Wisconsin. She was the despair of her mother and her older sister Clara. But her father watched her with a little shine of pride in his eyes, and her brothers accepted her as one of themselves without question. Indeed, Tom, who was two years older, and Warren, who was two years younger than Caddie, needed Caddie to link them together into an inseparable trio. Together they got in and out of more scrapes and adventures than any one of them could have imagined alone. And in those pioneer days Wisconsin offered plenty of opportunities for adventure to three wide-eyed, red-headed youngsters.

Seven years previous to this, when Mr. and Mrs. Woodlawn had brought their family to Wisconsin from Boston, young Caddie and her little sister Mary had been frail and in ill health. Mary soon died and Mr. Woodlawn had said to his wife, "Harriet, I want you to let Caddie run wild with the boys. Don't keep her in the house learning to be a lady. I would rather see her learn to plow than make samplers, if she can get her health by doing so. I believe it is worth trying. Bring the other girls up as you like, but let me have Caddie."

Father proved a good doctor because



Caddie set her hands to the handles of the plow and chirped to Betty

Father proved a good doctor because

soon Caddie was brown and strong and spirited.

When we first meet Caddie she is removing her clothes in order to join Tom and Warren in crossing the Menomonic River to visit their friend Indian John and his people. With their bundles of clothes held above their heads, the three adventurers, accompanied by their dog Nero, wade through the shoulder-high water to the opposite bank where, quickly donning their wrinkled clothes, they run to the Indian camp. The smell of birch smoke and hot pitch fill the air and act as a tonic to Caddie. Indian John is working on a half-finished canoe and so intently do the children watch the operation that time slips by unheeded. Even the squaws who come up to examine their flame-colored hair do not distract the Woodlawns. Finally when the odor of "jerked" venison mingles with the birch and pitch, Warren remembers he is hungry and his thoughts turn homeward. The sun is low when the three hurry for home, but Caddie must first stop to fill her apron with green hazelnuts. Flushed and disheveled, she later bursts into the dining-room to find the family not at an ordinary supper but at a company supper. The Circuit Rider is here! Completely taken aback, Caddie lets go her skirts, and a flood of green hazelnuts bounce and rattle into every corner of the room.

Following this explosive introduction, we share in Caddie's exuberant and impulsive course throughout one year—going hunting with Uncle Edmund, having a fist fight with the school's bully, riding wildly through the cold, dark night to warn her Indian friends of danger from the white men, tenderly spending her pre-



But something curious was beginning to happen to the raft

cious silver dollar on gifts for three half-breed children, gaily singing earthy folk songs with the Woodlawn's Irish hired man, caring for Indian John's dog and his scalp lock, helping Father repair clocks, and playing pranks on her refined city cousin.

Caddie's growing up is not a sudden, magical transformation. Rather we glimpse here and there a turning away from her boyish ways, a pricking of her conscience over some roughhousing, a faint twinge of jealousy over Clara's neatness or Cousin Annabelle's cultivated manners. Then came that climactic moment when, having stormed and fumed over being the only one punished for putting eggs inside Annabelle's blouse when she started to somersault, Father came into her bedroom.

(Caddie) lay very still with tightly closed eyes so that Father should think her asleep. It had fooled Hetty, but Father knew more than most people did. He put the candle down and sat on the side of the bed and took one of Caddie's hot hands in his cool ones. Then he began to speak

in his nice quiet voice, without asking her to wake up or open her eyes or look at him.

"Perhaps Mother was a little hasty today, Caddie," he said. "She really loves you very much, and, you see, she expects more of you than she would of someone she didn't care about. It's a strange thing, but somehow we expect more of girls than of boys. It is the sisters and wives and mothers, you know, Caddie, who keep the world sweet and beautiful. What a rough world it would be if there were only men and boys in it, doing things in their rough way! A woman's task is to teach them gentleness and courtesy and love and kindness. It's a big task, too, Caddie—harder than cutting trees or building mills or damming rivers. It takes nerve and courage and patience, but good women have these things. They have them just as much as the men who build bridges and carve roads through the wilderness. A woman's work is something fine and noble to grow up to, and it is just as important as a man's. But no man could ever do it so well. It don't want you to be the silly, affected person with fine clothes and manners, whom folks sometimes call a lady. No, that is not what I want for you, my little girl. I want you to be a woman with a wise and understanding heart, healthy in body and honest in mind. Do you think you would like to be growing into that woman now? How about it, Caddie, have we run with the colts long enough?"

After a little silence, hot tears streamed down Caddie's cheeks and she hugged Father hard. In the morning Caddie knew something special had happened to her that night. She knew she did not need to be afraid of growing up. It was not just sewing and wearing stays; it was a responsibility—a beautiful and precious one!

Later when the Circuit Rider again made his annual visit Caddie remarked:

What a lot has happened since last year when I dropped the nuts all over the dining-room floor. How far I've come! I'm the same girl and yet not the same. I

wonder if it's always like that? Folks keep growing from one person into another all their lives, and life is just a lot of everyday adventures. Well, whatever life is, I like it."

In her *Children and Books*, May Hill Arbuthnot says that stories about family life may heighten the child's learning the basic lessons "in the laws of affectionate relationships." Surely whether a child had a happy or unhappy home background, he can be the richer by having shared in the wholesome family life of the Woodlawns.

Mr. and Mrs. Woodlawn had deep love and respect for each other and for their seven children. This was seldom evidenced in so many words or in excessive displays of sentiment, but in quiet doing and giving. Mrs. Woodlawn felt "exasperation and calm concern" for her tom-boy daughter, and often was very firm



Gingerly, with the tips of her thumb and first finger, Caddie took it

with her, yet she showed deep understanding of child nature. For example, when Caddie learned that her beloved dog Nero was lost, she burst into bitter tears

until her grief subsided into sleep. Later, after dark, when she awoke stiff and cold and hungry

... she went downstairs and stood by the dining-room fire, warming her back and rubbing her hands together. On a corner of the table nearest the fire Mother had spread a napkin over the red and white checked homespun cloth. A place for one was neatly laid, and there was a bowl of warm milk, a plate of bread, a nicely polished red apple, and a plate of cold meat ... All of the children had gone to bed, only Father and Mother sat on beside the fire, each busy with some evening occupation.

"Sit down, dear, and eat," said Mother quietly.

Caddie obeyed, and there was no other sound in the room but the ticking of clocks and the occasional crackling of the fire. But something warm and peaceful and comforting seemed to flow through the quiet room and make everything right again.

Father taught his children a valuable lesson in self-reliance and sound judgment on the momentous occasion when he received notification that he had inherited an estate in England, provided he would leave America and forfeit his American citizenship. After discussing the inheritance with his wife, Mr. Woodlawn presented the matter to the children, telling them that a family vote would be taken as to whether the family would go or stay. He was careful not to impose his preference or prejudices on his offspring, but impartially pointed out the advantages and disadvantages. The children were urged to talk over the matter among themselves and with their parents and then make a personal decision. The decision was unanimous to remain Americans. Just as they found that family prayer brought them a

sense of belonging, so this participation on a vital family issue brought the Woodlawn children into closer unity and understanding among themselves and with their parents.

The young Woodlawns might at times be candidly critical of one another, but basically they displayed a sound allegiance. When Caddie realized that her older brother Tom was working hard to buy a beautiful lacey Valentine for shy, pretty Katie Hyman and that his secret was threatened to exposure before the school, Caddie, although hurt that the Valentine was not to be hers, kindly managed to shield Tom from the rough joshing of his peers.



Obediah pulling her curls this way and that and Caddie getting in a kick on his shins whenever she could

Caddie showed compassion for her sometimes troublesome younger sister Hetty at the time Cousin Annabelle rejected Hetty's eagerly proffered, albeit wilted nosegay. Caddie put a quick arm about Hetty's shoulders and said, "That was an awful pretty nosegay you made, Hetty." The little girl's downcast face brightened; she offered the flowers to

Caddie, who accepted this bit of unwanted feminine frippery with grace and thanks.

In these days when families have so many demands on their time, it is heartening to read of the simple pleasures and warm-hearted atmosphere of the Woodlawn's evenings together:

It was the evening before Uncle Edmund's departure. A sharp wind blew about the house to remind them that even Indian summer must come to an end at last. Warm and cozy indoors, the Woodlawn family sat about the dining-room table. The supper cloth had been removed with the dishes, and a homespun cloth of red and white had taken its place with a lamp in the middle . . . Tonight by the light of the lamp Mrs. Woodlawn and Clara were darning, Mr. Woodlawn was mending a clock, and Uncle Edmund was cleaning his gun. The younger children sat about his feet near the fire, twisting bits of paper into the lighters which were used whenever possible instead of the precious sulphur matches.



As a frontier story, *Caddie Woodlawn* is filled with accurate details of the period and place: the threat of Indian uprisings, the Circuit Rider, the sky-darkening flight of the passenger pigeons, the fact that Mr. Woodlawn paid someone to serve his term in the army, tea made of dried leaves of the wild strawberry plant, sulphur matches, spelling bees, speaking day at school, calico and denim dresses, churning and butter making, building a canoe. Although laid at the time of the Civil War, the war plays no actual part in the story. Unlike so many pictures of pioneer times

which stress hardships and drudgery, this book shows that there were many fun-filled everyday adventures and a zest for living.

Since the Woodlawn family lived close to the earth, they felt a kinship with the outdoors. It is therefore fitting that Mrs. Brink has appropriately included some descriptions of the out-of-doors. These descriptions, though unobtrusive, cannot fail to increase the child's awareness of the beauty and power of nature.

It was perfect Indian-summer weather. The birch trees were all atremble with thinning gold. The oaks and sugar maples were putting on their vivid reds and orange hues, and river, lake, and sky were all sublimely blue.

There was no proper sunset that day, only a sudden, lemon-colored rift in the clouds in the west. Then the clouds closed together again and darkness began to fall . . . The wind came down the bare sweep of the river with tremendous force, cutting and lashing them with the sleet.

Spring came quickly in the next few days . . . All through the woods sprang up a carpet of trilliums and wind flowers and hepaticas. They were delicate pink and blue and white, and there were so many of them that picking did not spoil them. The wild cherry trees put on dresses of white like brides or young ladies at their first ball. The tender new leaves on the trees were almost as many-colored as in autumn. Some were softly yellow, some pinkish-red, some like bronze or copper. Later they would all be green, and they would grow dusty with summer and look tired and languid in the heat. But now everything was fresh and young.

Caddie Woodlawn is well-loved not only because it is a good story well told, but also because, like all truly fine books,

(Continued on Page 237)

In Defense of Individualized Reading

Dr. Paul Witty's article, "Individualized Reading: A Survey and Evaluation,"¹ needs to be questioned from several points of view.

Dr. Witty describes "developmental reading" as that which combines the "best features of both individualized and group instruction." This statement gives support to the use of basal readers. It does not make clear the differences between the individualized, self-selection approach and the ability-grouped, basal reader approach so long dominant in educational practice.

I am heartened and encouraged to read² that "The good reading program is one in which the so-called basal materials are recognized as no *more basal* than additional printed materials which provide for development and wide application of skills" and that "One should recognize the limitations in some basal materials."³ This hardly comes to grips with some of the controversial issues at stake. Later on we are told, "... an efficient reading program includes both 'individualized' and group activities. Moreover [it] is developmental in approach and . . . 1) aims to cultivate the skills . . . 2) recognizes various purposes and needs for teaching . . . 3) depends on other experiences and activities in association with reading . . . 4) seeks the fulfillment or extension of interests . . ."⁴

This is an admirable statement about an efficient reading program. I think it says just what an individualized program should stand for. But the next paragraph continues:

"A *defensible* reading program *accordingly* recognizes the value of systematic instruction.⁵ (*italics mine*). What is meant by "systematic

instruction"? Does he mean what I mean by that term? A thoughtful re-reading of the total concluding statement reveals that "systematic instruction" will include the use of a basal text as the "dependable guide and efficient plan for insuring the acquisition of basic skills."⁶

Here I must part company with Dr. Witty. I believe in systematic instruction, but of the type that develops with each child as he reads through increasingly challenging materials. Because of these and other reasons I submit that Dr. Witty's article is incorrectly titled. The questions that I raise deal with the inadequacies of both its "survey" and its "evaluation" aspects.

What, then, would I have Dr. Witty do to meet my criticism?

More Definition of Classroom Practice Needed

I think, first, that a more complete definition of individualized reading is needed. The historical background is well done, but the description of actual classroom practice is limited. Several good references are cited, but the addition of something like the following would be helpful:

1

Individualizing a reading program means that pupils personally choose the books and materials by which teachers instruct each one in reading. These books must number roughly triple the class size in different titles. They must include more than the varied and changing interests of every pupil. There must be enough titles at all achievement levels to guar-

¹ (Assisted by Ann Coomer and Robert Sizemore.) *Elementary English*, October, 1959.

² P. 411

³ P. 410

⁴ P. 413

⁵ P. 450

⁶ P. 410

Dr. Veatch is Associate Professor of Education at Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania. This article is a critique of Professor Paul Witty's article in the October, 1959, issue of *Elementary English*.

antee a valid, honest selection by each child. The teacher selects the book supply, but the child chooses his own book—perhaps with help and guidance—but with honest respect for his preferences.

2

Individualizing a reading program includes group organization on *other* bases than general achievement or ability. As each teacher confers with each pupil on his self-selected material, the diagnosis of the specific difficulty is more easily discernible than under any other condition. When two or more children have a common difficulty—or interest or purpose—the teacher groups *them* and provides immediate help on that specific item. The teacher dissolves the group when she sees no necessity of working further. It is then replaced by a new one with *other* pupils having *other* problems in common. There is no permanent group of any kind for any child.

As the days roll by, the reading period is divided roughly in half, the first portion devoted to individual conferences, the latter to group meetings. The teacher plans the group meetings from the private individual records of the preceding day where notations are kept of difficulties, problems, and challenges.

3

Individualizing a reading program means a personal teaching period for each child of at least five minutes about every three days. The interrogation and observational skills of the teacher, as always, determine the value of that conference. There is no manual to tell her *what* questions to ask, but there are sources which tell a teacher what *kind*⁷ of questions to ask. But we know that the intensity of learning resulting from the intimacy of this personal contact is a powerful motivation for children to read *independently*. Even if the amount of time spent in oral reading were the same in

both approaches, the high level of pupil-teacher interaction, facilitated by the *structure* of the one-to-one relationship, greatly increases the will to learn, as compared to that found in the low-level interaction of a ten-to-one situation. When a child has his teacher all to himself, the feeling that "somebody cares" easily develops.

But the time spent on reading for each child is *not* the same in an individualized program as it is in an ability-grouped program. Under the former, each child's silent reading is markedly increased over the latter approach. The amount of oral reading in each is about the same, although more intensive opportunities occur under a self-selection program than under any other type. For example, under the traditional program of ability grouping, 30 children are divided up into about three groups of ten each. Each group has about one-third of the hour of an hour-and-a-half long reading period, or 20 to 30 minutes for each group. This figures to about 2 to 3 minutes per child per day. *But*, the conventional five-step lesson plan requires 1) motivation for the story, 2) vocabulary study (on unknown words not as yet met in the basal reader), 3) preliminary silent reading with skill and comprehension building—all of which take place *before* any child reads orally to his teacher.⁸ What then happens to the amount of time spent on oral reading in a 20-30 minute reading period? Obviously it is drastically reduced. A child is lucky if he reads orally every *other* day. Time allotments looked at in this way show why a child reading every third day to his teacher in an individual conference has equal or more actual oral reading than his conference in an ability-grouped pattern.

Another aspect of the individual conference is so unique as to merit emphasis. The oral reading of children under a basal plan usually consists of material that the teacher has heard

⁷J. Veatch, *Individualizing Your Reading Program*, p. 53, New York: G. P. Putnam, 1959.

⁸It might be noted that No. 1 and No. 2 are quite unnecessary in an individualized program.

so many times that boredom must be fought, and concentration on the children's efforts is difficult. When the material has been chosen by the child, his personal commitment to its meaning is of such high level that teachers find themselves easily caught up in the content of the material. I have been told by many teachers that they learn to know many trade books in a surprisingly short time, simply because they become interested in the stories that the pupils discuss with them and read to them during these individual conferences.

The Irreconcilable Must Be Faced

What else would I have wished Dr. Witty to include in his article?

I would have hoped that a listing, and discussion, of those issues which are irreconcilable between basal reader systems and self-selection programs would have been included. These are two *opposing* approaches to reading instruction, and to pretend otherwise is not to understand the full import of one or the other. Dr. Witty does seem to feel that the "good" aspects of individualization can be incorporated in a "developmental" program, which, you recall, he defines as *including* basal readers. I think he is wrong. I think the inclusion of the unique practices of an individuated program would *destroy* a basal, ability-grouped program, and high time, too.

But what are some of these controversial, irreconcilable issues? Let me list some, and hope that they will be dealt with more deeply in some future publication.

1

To what degree do the teacher-made assignments in teacher-chosen (i.e. administration-publisher-chosen) books and materials affect the desire of the child to learn to read?

2

To what extent does the current conventional ability-grouping affect the mental health of our nation's children?

3

To what extent does the individual's own choice of activity, differing from any of his peers, promote or retard mental health and social growth?

4

To what extent does the use of the manual and the year-in-year-out repetition of its lessons in infrequently-revised textbooks affect the dynamic and creative character of the teaching?

5

To what extent do the skills that one child needs in learning to read coincide *in any aspect* with needed skills of other children in the peer group?

6

To what extent does the systematic instruction using basal texts enhance or retard the application of the right skill to the right child at the right time?

7

To what extent should all skills be taught to all children—or more than two at a time—in identical sequence?

8

To what extent does self-selection differ in principle when used in an individualized program and when used in the extended-reading phase of a basal program?

9

What is the difference between the *teacher-assignment* type of individuation (the heart of the Dalton and Winnetka plans) and the pupil *self-assignment* type which is the heart of the approach under discussion?

10

To what extent does the personal individual conference, and the fluid special-needs grouping, affect the learning climate of a given classroom?

11

To what extent do identical assignments for a group or class compare in learning effectiveness to self-assignments under teacher guidance?

Ruth Strickland raised other questions that merit inclusion.⁹

"Question 1. Why have we, in our effort to build readiness for reading worked it thru more and more mechanical means, and departed even farther from the way in which children most naturally learn?

Question 2. Why have we simplified and still further simplified the material we put in beginning readers until the sentences children are to read bear little resemblance to the sentences they speak?

Question 3. How do we justify the co-cabulary of the present day readers and the conviction that vocabulary *alone* (italics mine) determined level of difficulty?

.....
Question 6. Why must we start all children in the same or similar books?"

These are but some questions to which all educators interested in reading instruction must address themselves far more assiduously than they have in the past. In my opinion, these are the questions which proponents of basal texts must answer if they are to work towards improvement in reading practice.

I feel that these questions are indeed appropriate to include in an article entitled "Individualized Reading: A Survey and Evaluation," since they raise issues between two basically differing patterns. Basal reader proponents cannot have their cake and eat it, too. These issues cannot be dodged forever. They must be faced.

A Section on Research

Another area that I would have wished Dr.

Witty to include in his article would have been the important and best investigations now available. It is indeed puzzling to figure out why he omitted so many of the best. Perhaps it is because the majority are, as yet, unpublished. It is hoped that this mention will speed the day when they will appear in print.

More Research Needed

Since the first national push in the direction of self-selection type individuation did not come until 1952-53, it is a wonder that we have as much data as now exists. That much of these data gives us a fairly large picture of the pattern is fortunate, particularly in the light of the curious lack of interest in this new departure and new idea in the specialized field of reading. The International Reading Association, for example, has not *programmed* a single paper at its national conventions on the subject of individualized reading since 1957. There seems to be a kind of boycott or censorship of the subject even though discussion from the floor in 1958 and 1959 meetings was not lacking.

For that matter, in spite of thousands of studies on reading, we still know little about the total value of *any* major reading practice. What well-controlled studies, for example, with durability measurement, support the hoary practice of segregating children in remedial reading classes? And what about Dr. Witty's pattern of developmental reading? Traxler¹⁰ found "... after two decades the term developmental reading is not standardized in common usage. There was *little actual research* of (it) during this period" (italics mine). I wonder why Dr. Witty is so demanding of full-blown research of the infant practice of individualized reading when that practice which he espouses is considered neglected in one of the major research volumes on reading?

⁹Allen J. Figurel (ed.), *Reading in a Changing Society*, pp. 162-164; 1959 Proceedings, International Reading Association, Vol. 4. New York: Scholastic Magazines.

¹⁰A. E. Traxler, et al, *Eight More Years of Research in Reading*, p. 38. New York: Educational Records Bureau, 1955.

What Do Studies Show?

The first two studies I would like to mention are largely descriptive and observational in character. But within the limitations of their structure they give us valuable information on the subject, "What about the skills?" "Are the skills really taught?"

Constance Carr¹¹ found that teaching skills and developing abilities were an integral part of an individualized program. She investigated 20 third and fourth grades using such an approach to discover what skills and abilities were developed. Comparing her observations with recommendations made by six authors of major texts on the teaching of reading, she found the teachers strongest in teaching those skills which all authors said were important, and weakest in those about which there was some controversy as to their importance. Dr. Carr's study raises questions as to the conventional sequence of time and place of certain skills, yet verified that skills actually were taught.

The Board of Education of the City of New York¹², in an initial survey of this practice in 20 schools, notes:

- "...teachers are more aware of the skills than they have ever been before.
- ... Teachers are developing the skills with more insight than heretofore.
- ... Teachers, rather than reading manuals, are assuming responsibility for teaching the skills . . .
- Not every step of every skill needs to be taught to every child."*

¹¹C. Carr, *Individual Development of Abilities and Skills in Reading*. Unpublished Ed. dissertation, Teachers College, Columbia University 1958.

¹²Board of Education, City of N. Y. *Individualized Reading: Interim Report 1956-57* Mimeographed.

(Readers will be interested to know that all of the New York City Material now in mimeographed form will be available in a monograph in Spring, 1960. It has long been the most comprehensive treatise in a bibliography now reaching over a hundred items. Statistical data is being prepared for inclusion.)

Gertrude Hildreth,¹³ in discussing the experimentation in New York City, where hundreds of teachers are now individualizing their reading instruction, notes in her book: "Teachers have discovered that all free choice reading of a primary pupil develops his skill; so long as the child has assistance when he requires it" (italics mine). This is not a study, of course, but an observation by a major figure in the field of education.

There are references to the matter of skill teaching in the innumerable articles about the practice. But the above, particularly the first two, I believe, serve as at least tentative substantiations that skills most assuredly *do* get taught in an individual program. As with every aspect of all reading programs, we need more and more detailed work.

Let us move to another type of study. There are several that should not be excluded from the presentation. The following depend, to greater and lesser degrees, upon experimentation with controls built into the investigation. These are a far cry from those which worried Constance McCullough with their reports of "cheerful miens and numbers of books." (I trust she has by now regretted *that* statement.)

The findings of the following studies cover so many facets of reading instruction that it is exceedingly difficult to organize them under any one category. Thus I will proceed to describe each study separately, and report on what I consider to be pertinent findings.

I feel that the best research (i.e., with the best controls) is that of Antoinette McChristy.¹⁴ She matched 8 second grades on 1) year's attendance and age; 2) mental status; 3) socio-

¹³G. Hildreth, *Teaching Reading*, p. 257. New York: Henry Holt, 1958. ²Quoted on p. 410 of the article.

¹⁴A. McCristy, *A Comparative Study to Determine Whether Self-Selection Reading Can Be Successfully Used at Second Grade Level*. Unpublished master's dissertation. University of Southern California, 1957.

economic class; 4) reading grade status; 5) teacher background, experience, and competence; and then compared the results of the experimental self-selection pattern with the conventional basal reading pattern. She reports that:

- 1) Mean grade achievement, total reading gain, and vocabulary were significant statistically in favor of the experimental groups.
- 2) On results of the regular testing program (California Reading Test, forms BB & CC) 59% of the experimental subjects gained 2 years or more, while 24% of control subjects gained 2 years or more.

She concluded that this approach could be used successfully in the second grade and would yield results superior to the conventional three ability grouped, basal reading pattern, and the children *could* choose materials that would promote their reading growth.

From a study by Cyrog¹⁵ of a self-selection program by seven elementary teachers over a three year program, I note in part that:

1. Individualized reading over a two or three-year period produces better than average results.
2. Individualized reading can be used successfully in first grade.

The "halo" or Hawthorne effect was minimized but not entirely eliminated, by such measures as equal time spent in experimental and control classes in the reading period, uniform class size, equal consultant assistance, and equal administrative emphasis.

Philip Acinapuro¹⁶ in a controlled study of

three pairs of middle grade classes found statistically significant differences favoring the individualized groups in 1) silent reading comprehension, 2) total silent and oral achievement.¹⁷ He found individualized reading is equally effective as a three-ability group approach in the development of reading vocabulary.

As this is one of the best controlled studies available, I think it noteworthy that his data revealed his experimental subjects reading more both in and out of school. This, I should think, should give pause to those who do not find pupils reading much outside of school. Is not something wrong when children don't like to take books home? Is it true that basal readers are, perhaps, not intended to be enjoyed until *after* all skills are learned? Acinapuro shows that skills and the "cheerful miens" went along together.

Sam Duker¹⁸ reports on a study which, among other things, should allay the charge that "only master teachers can individualize successfully." He set up a situation in which student teachers carried the brunt of the experimentation and were compared against experienced teachers following a conventional basal program. Ten fourth, fifth, and sixth grade classes were involved. Dr. Duker leaned over backward in avoiding unwarranted assumptions. Yet, in spite of some minor structural flaws, this work does give us new insights into its area of investigation. He found statistically significant gains in achievement and vocabulary improvement (Stanford Achievement Tests used) and, as with Acina-

¹⁵Francis Cyrog, "A Principal and His Staff Move Forward in Developing New Ways of Thinking About Reading," *California Journal of Elementary Education*, 27 (February, 1959) 178-87.

¹⁶Philip Acinapuro, *A Comparative Study of the Results of Two Instructional Reading Programs: An Individualized Pattern and 3-Ability Group Pattern*. Unpublished Ed. D. Dissertation. Teachers College, Columbia University, New York 1959.

¹⁷Tests used were: Gray's Standardized Oral Reading Paragraphs, C. A. Gregory Co., Indianapolis, Indiana. Iowa Every Pupil Tests of Basic Skills. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin.

¹⁸S. Duker, "Research Report: Effects of Introducing an Individualized Reading Approach by Student Teachers," *Research in Action*, p. 59, 1957. Proceedings International Reading Association.

puro, markedly improved attitudes towards reading and lessening of problems of discipline.

These are several, among many available, that I believe need inclusion in a presentation such as this. In my opinion, each of these uses much better research techniques than those in the article. Dr. Witty failed to point out the weaknesses in those cited of Kaar, Walker, Bohnhorst and Sellars, Anderson, *et al.* Therefore, I felt constrained to comment that the best investigations were omitted from the article.

There are many, many reports in the bibliography¹⁹ that, while informative, are not well-grounded, research-wise. In most of them the "halo" or Hawthorne effect is obvious and has quite correctly been pointed out by Dr. Gray, McCullough, and others. These report teacher experience and observation with self-selection. The lengthy bibliography includes so many that space permits mention of only a few: Lucy Polansky,²⁰ Ethel M. Schmidt,²¹ from the same source as Dr. Duker's report. Those by Willard C. Olson, Frances Maib, Grace Garretson, Mabel L. Johnson, June McLeod, Bessie Maxey, Jill Bonney and Levin Hanigan, and Mildred E. Thompson²² are some more that should be noted. Except to those who wish to disprove the effectiveness of an individualized program, these reports have not served as *research references* so much as needed *sources* for eager and experimentally minded teachers. I personally feel that these articles and reports are more like case studies and are more wisely used as examples of classroom practice.

¹⁹I will be happy to send a bibliography to those who request it, % Penn State University, University Park, Pa. Enclose a long, self-addressed stamped envelope.

²⁰*Research in Action*, Proceedings of the International Reading Association, 1957, p. 59, 167.

²¹*Ibid.*, p. 169.

²²All reprinted in J. Veatch, *Individualizing Your Reading Program*. New York: G. P. Putnam, 1959.

There are undoubtedly many more studies which have not come to my attention. I would be happy to be informed of any others.

Baltimore County, Maryland, has set up a controlled research project involving eighteen classrooms in which children are matched as to age, grade, reading achievement, and intelligence, and teachers matched as to experience. Six classes are using the complete traditional basal reader approach; six classes are using a modified, part basal, part individualized approach; and six are on a completely individualized approach. However, the six classes on an individualized pattern are interpreting it as one which *excludes any* grouping. This is unfortunate because, if not corrected, an accurate evaluation will not occur.

There are several doctoral studies now in progress. I happen to know of one by Sperry at Los Angeles State College, Kelly and Braidford at New York University, Bretlinger at the University of Arizona, and Carline, Bird, Stine, and Mattera at Penn State. These vary in design from survey type to controlled experimentation.

In addition to these several doctoral studies, Dr. Lyman C. Hunt of The Pennsylvania State University, under a U.S. Government grant, is conducting a TV experiment using 15 half-hour programs on the teaching of reading in which individuation bears a major part. This should culminate in some important findings later in the year.

May I again point out that there is no doubt that much, much more research is needed. But it must, as I believe these I have described do, come to grips with more of the fundamental issues. We must move on from that classic study on reading disability, *Why Pupils Fail in Reading*, by Helen A. Robinson²³ (a great step forward in its day), which makes no mention of the possibility that pupils fail in reading because they so dislike that which is *given them* to read by teachers—namely, the basal

²³Chicago: The University Chicago Press, 1943.

readers. New investigations must explore *this* territory. What is the role of pupil choice of material in learning to read? Where is the research which shows that children *like* to read basal books exclusively? Is this as important as teachers who have used the self-selection principle in their classroom think it is? Sperber²⁴ asks: "Have you ever seen . . . children in your class fight over a basal reader?" Is he alone?

In concluding my discussion of research, may I repeat that all we now know about individualized reading is still inadequate, even though we do see some major guidelines. It seems to me that we should welcome a new

²⁴Robert Sperber, "Individualizing a Third Grade Program," from *Individualizing Reading Practices* by Alice Miel, p. 34. Teachers College, Columbia University, 1958.

and challenging approach—even if it is the first serious threat to a decades-old system. I am appalled at the finality with which Dr. Witty and other able, well-known people have pre-judged or incorrectly judged this developing practice as 1) unimportant, or 2) a "fad," or 3) something good teachers have always done.

Individualized reading is but the beginning of a renaissance in which teaching is returned to the teacher. It is what Alexander Frazier calls "open learning"—in which all children progress at their own speed regardless of that of their peers.

Ours is a wide and free country, and difference of opinion is to be cherished—but let us differ on fundamental issues, not on inadequate information.

AUDREY DICKHART

Children Choose Their Books

We who teach should seek continuously to improve teaching and learning. In order to improve, we must have a zest for searching, for testing our findings, and for continuing the search.

In the quest for the improvement of instruction, there is much to learn from children. For example, while trying to guide reading with a group of underprivileged children in a first grade classroom, the teacher found it necessary to constantly remind them to follow along as one child read orally from the preprimer. It was James who helped this teacher to question the procedure.

After being reminded to stay on the right page and to follow the one who was reading, James said, "We starts at the same place, but some of us gets there

first. How come we has to keep lookin' if we knows how to read it?"

It was evident that in a so-called homogeneous group, there were individual differences in regard to rate and rhythm of eye movement. Somehow the teacher had failed to recognize the many factors involved in the principle of individual differences.

When a variety of preprimers and easy books were placed on the library table, and each child had selected the one which was of interest to him, there was a marked change in attitude toward and interest in reading.

Miss Dickhart is an assistant professor at the State University Teachers College in New Paltz, N. Y. This paper was given at the annual meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English at Pittsburgh.

The teacher sat with groups of children and helped each to develop word recognition and to read with understanding. While she was guiding some children, others showed continuous interest in reading books which they had selected. This much was obvious—these boys and girls felt *good* about reading.

Here is a question which inspires some of us to continue the search: *If a child is to grow in the ability to recognize words and to comprehend meanings, can he do so more readily when he is working at his own rate with books which have meaning to him and which he enjoys sharing with others, rather than following the lines while others read orally?*

In another first grade classroom which differed from the previous one as far as the children's socio-economic and experimental backgrounds were concerned, the teacher learned more about children and reading.

The pupils who were ready to read started with one of the preprimers—the same one, however. Each read it at his own rate, in this case. After Sandra had completed the book, she asked, "Why do they use so much baby-talk all the time?"

"What do you think we should do about this?" inquired the teacher.

"I'd like to read the book about the lake on our library table," responded Sandra. "I know the word *lake* because I can read *Lake Erie*."

Sandra and others began to read books which they had chosen from those displayed in the room library. As skill in

reading developed, more books were added to meet the range of abilities and interests of these young readers; and frequent trips to the school library increased the number and variety of reading materials. When necessary, the teacher helped the children choose books which were suited to their abilities and tastes, and which provided opportunities for continuous growth in reading skills.

At this point our second question arises: *If a child is to develop a taste for reading and to become an intelligent selector, should he be expected to read books which are "beneath him" in terms of vocabulary and plot?*

In this same classroom, Mark was one of the first to read critically and to weigh facts. While reading about turtles to learn more about their care, he discovered that one book gave some information about box turtles which he questioned, since another book had not given the same information.

This seemed to be the time to help Mark to search for reliable sources, and to encourage him to find and weigh facts. At the same time, it brings us to the third question: *If a child is to develop reading study skills, will he become more proficient when he is given the opportunity to read for information at the time he is ready and eager to solve a problem?*

As the months passed, most of these children became avid readers. They read to find information, and for the pleasure of reading and sharing favorite stories with others.

Tommy Begins to Enjoy Reading

"The accumulated wisdom of the race is available to anyone who can read a book."

It isn't too often that school librarians have the privilege of seeing a child really begin to read and enjoy books for the first time. They go along day by day helping children choose books to read and hoping that sometimes they happen to recommend the right book to the right child at the right time. But last school year and this, one school librarian had the pleasure of actually seeing one child begin to read library books by himself.

Tommy was a fourth grader last year. He was the sort of fourth grader who had managed to get that far in school doing only what was absolutely required. Since he wasn't particularly interested in reading, he was below fourth grade reading level. His ability was only average. He listened to stories or poems which were read aloud to the class but was not interested in checking out library books to read by himself. During library classes he was sometimes a discipline problem.

One library day when Tommy had wandered aimlessly around the shelves and still hadn't found any book that appealed to him, the librarian handed him *Country School* by Jerrold Beim (2). More to please her than anything else, Tommy took the book to the charging desk and checked it out.

The next day the fourth grade teacher, who really knew what each child in her room was reading, came dashing up to the librarian and said excitedly, "Do you have

any more of those books like you gave Tommy yesterday? He's read that one *all the way through*. First book he's read all year. Can I send him in to you at your reference time to get another?"

When Tommy came to the library at reference time, he and the librarian had a nice time discussing *Country School*. Then the librarian said, "Since you enjoyed that book, would you like another by the same author?" Tommy agreed and went out with *Country Fireman* by Jerrold Beim (3) tucked under his arm.

This kind of thing continued. When Tommy finished a book, the classroom teacher allowed him to come to the library for another. He finally started asking for books by the author's name. He read all the Jerrold Beim books in the school library. Then the librarian, who works in two buildings, brought over Jerrold Beim books from her other school library.

One day the supply was exhausted. So the librarian showed Tommy some books by Marion Renick. *Jimmy's Own Basketball* (4), *Nicky's Football Team* (5), *Pete's Home Run* (6), and *Todd's Snow Patrol* (7), proved to be even more enjoyable to Tommy than *Country School*, *Country Fireman*, and the others he had started out on.

By this time Tommy had decided for himself that reading wasn't so bad after all. True, he wasn't reading books which are written on a fourth grade reading level but only the librarian and his teacher

Miss Nims is librarian at the Carpenter School, Midland, Michigan.

knew that. The important fact was Tommy was reading and enjoying it.

The school year ended. Tommy was promoted to Fifth Grade. The first time his class came to the library the librarian was waiting for him with a new Renick book in her hand. It was *John's Back Yard Camp* (8). Tommy started in where he had ended the previous year.

Tommy's adventure with reading is still continuing. About three weeks ago he asked the librarian for the book *Call Me Charley* (9) by Jesse Jackson. She gave it to him with some misgivings. That book was quite a bit more difficult to read than the books Tommy had been reading. But Tommy told her one of his Fifth Grade classmates had said it was a good book about a Negro boy and he wanted to read it also. The librarian suggested they read the first page together to try it out. Imagine her delight when Tommy could read it right along with no

difficulty! Tommy had "graduated" from the Beim and Renick books and was ready for something written on a Fifth Grade level.

Tommy is only one boy in one school but this is an example of what can happen when school librarian and classroom teacher work together.

¹From the bulletin *Public Library Service, A Guide to Standards*, published by the American Library Association.

²Beim, Jerrold—*Country School*, Morrow, 1955.

³Beim, Jerrold—*Country Fireman*, Morrow, 1948.

⁴Renick, Marion—*Jimmy's Own Basketball*, Scribner, 1952.

⁵Renick, Marion—*Nicky's Football Team*, Scribner, 1951.

⁶Renick, Marion—*Pete's Home Run*, Scribner, 1952.

⁷Renick, Marion—*Todd's Snow Patrol*, Scribner, 1955.

⁸Renick, Marion—*John's Back Yard Camp*, Scribner, 1954.

⁹Jackson, Jesse—*Call Me Charley*, Harper, 1954.

CADDIE WOODLAWN (Continued from Page 226)

it has that intangible spark that feeds the spirit of the reader. It was written out of a mature personal philosophy, an honest respect for childhood, and a perceptive awareness of and appreciation for life and living. In her Newbery Award Acceptance, Carol Brink said, "If we can just keep hold of some of the sturdy pioneer qualities of these grandparents to hand down to our children, perhaps our children will be better fitted to meet courageously the difficult problems of our modern world. It is an entirely different world, but, after all, the pioneer qualities of

courage, willingness to go to meet the unknown, and steadfastness under difficulties are the things most needed today, as they were then."

Anatole France once said, "When you are writing for children, do not assume a style for the occasion. Think your best and write your best. Let the whole thing live; let there be plenty of breadth and power. That is the one secret of pleasing your readers." Surely this is the spirit in which Carol Brink wrote *Caddie Woodlawn* and rightly it continues to live and to please boys and girls all over the world.

How Do You Serve Your Spelling Drill?

Hamburgers can be good, but who wants even a *good* hamburger for dinner night after night? However, hamburger served in tamale pie, as meat balls with spaghetti, as part of a tasty casserole, as beef-biscuit roll, or in tacos, can furnish a very palatable variety.

How do you serve your spelling drill? In the same way every day ("Let's say, spell, say.")—"Write your list of words two times.") or do you try to introduce some variety into the drill that is necessary for spelling mastery?

Here are a few suggested variations that can be used after the new spelling words have been introduced, and these ideas will probably suggest many others to you.

1. A child chosen to be "It" says "What word am I thinking of?" Three guesses are allowed. If the word is guessed, that child must say, spell, say the word (and then the whole class may say, spell, say). If the word is not guessed, "It" will say, spell, say the word, and then choose the next child to be It."

2. One child says the first letter of one of the spelling words; he calls on another child who adds a letter, and so on until a whole word has been spelled; the child saying the last letter must say, spell, say the word.

3. In a game called "Who Is a Good Detective?" or "I Know a Secret About a Word" (primary children *love* secrets!), phonics techniques are used. For instance, "Which of our spelling words rhymes with cake?" or "Which word begins like 'run' ends?"

- a. The teacher can ask these questions;

- b. The children can think of the

questions and whisper them to the teacher before addressing them to the class so she will be sure their meaning is clear;

- c. If the children are not ready for composing their own questions, the teacher can whisper the question to "It".

4. Have the children fold a lined paper in small squares and put a letter of the alphabet in each square. Then they cut out the alphabet letters and use them as anagrams to make the spelling words.

5. Use cut and paste ideas. The children can make fall leaves, or Christmas ornaments, or toys, or Easter eggs, or spring flowers, and write a spelling word on each one.

6. Have the children make a crayon picture and write spelling words in the objects on the picture. (This has elicited some pleasingly original ideas in my room. The first time we did it, one boy showed a Western gunslinger with his gun puffing clouds of smoke, one spelling word in each puff, and the next time he showed a boy blowing bubbles, with a spelling word in each bubble!)

7. Put the list of words on the board with the letters scrambled, and the child must decide which word is indicated— orally, or by writing it at the board, or by having the whole class unscramble the list on paper. If the children are mature enough, "It" can scramble a word orally or on the board and the child successful in determining the word may be the next "It".

8. Put the list of words on the board with some letters missing in each word. This can be an oral or written exercise.

9. Have an interesting story on the board in which the spelling words are

Mrs. Hart is a primary teacher in the Smedley School, Denver, Colorado.

used. a. children write the story, and draw a crayon line under each spelling word.

10. It is standard practice to have the children use a word in a sentence. Have you tried having them use at least two of the words in a sentence, or seeing who can use the most spelling words in a sentence? Also you can put sentences on the board, each of them having two blanks for spelling words.

11. "It" spells a word. He then chooses someone to identify the word. The child who identifies it correctly is the next "It."

12. Put a list of words on the board which includes several known words in addition to spelling words. Have the children put the words in alphabetical order, and put a funny face by their spelling words.

13. Seven-up spelling

a. The seven-up line (a line of seven children) each has a spelling word on a ragboard card. When the leader says, "Heads down, hands out," the children at their desks do as directed, with no peeking. Then the seven children tiptoe around the room, each leaving a card in the hand of one of the children with heads down. When the leader says, "Heads up, stand up," the children having cards stand. As each child in the seven-up line says the name of the person to whom he has given a card, that card bearer must say-spell-say the word on the card in

order to exchange places in the line with the person who gave it to him.

b. The leader says, "Heads down, thumbs up." The seven children each pinch someone's thumb. When the leader says, "Heads up, stand up," the children who were pinched stand up. As each child in the seven-up line says the name of the one he pinched, that child must say-spell-say any one of the words from the spelling list. He then takes the place of the one who pinched him.

14. This game, one of the favorites in my room, is called "I Can Skip and I Can Spell." "It" is determined by choosing a child who can say-spell-say a word. He then skips to another child and says, "I can skip and I can spell; can you skip and spell?" This child answers yes and says-spells-says one of the spelling words; he then skips to another child and thus the game proceeds. One variation is "I can bounce and I can spell," each child getting to bounce a ball if he spells correctly, or "I can jump and I can spell," using a jump rope.

It is hoped that any drill work will carry over so that children will be competent spellers in activities other than drill, such as writing creative stories, or letters, and that the teacher will be able to provide many such opportunities for children to discover if they really know how to spell.

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A Non-Discriminatory Spelling Game

Teachers are often put in the unique position of directing an activity the children desire, knowing full well the activity is frowned upon from the developmentalist point of view.

The writer personally dislikes "spelling-bees" because they discriminate against the poor speller and also because they create uncalled for tension in the room. Games such as these are oftentimes very unfair, and embarrassing to the low achiever. And yet the writer has had children, admittedly good spellers, who ask beguilingly for a "good old-fashioned spelling-bee."

The writer, and children in the elementary laboratory schools of Western Michigan University of Kalamazoo, Michigan, and Wisconsin State College at Eau Claire, Wisconsin, created and perfected a spelling baseball game which is non-discriminatory in nature, and which builds up a tremendous amount of interest in spelling, besides giving daily drill to a necessary skill.

The game goes like this: The teacher, or a child, prints these words on any available scraps of paper: Home Run, Triple, Double, Single, Walk, and Out. Make about ten of each, depending on class size. Put these in a box on teacher's desk, or any table.

The children then divide up into two teams, and it *doesn't matter where the good spellers or bad spellers are*. The game then goes like any baseball game. Each side has three outs, or can score as many runs as they spell correct words.

But the non-discriminatory part comes in here. The first child coming to the teacher's desk or table to draw a word can just as easily draw an out as he can a home run. *No words have been spelled yet*. A good speller, or a poor one, takes a chance on whatever he draws, and it can be an out as easily as a home run.

If the child draws an out, he immediately goes to his seat. He does not get the opportunity to spell a word, or misspell a word, and is not discriminated against. In drawing, ability makes no differences.

But should the child draw any of the other opportunities, he spells a word. *The words get progressively harder as is the drawn hit or run*. For instance: a walk can be a very easy word. A single can be a little harder. A double can be a little harder, while eventually, the home run can be a dilly.

And here is another differentiation between this baseball and a typical game. The teacher does not necessarily have to get words from just a spelling text. Actually, it is educatively more meaningful, makes the game more fun, and contributes to more "whole" growth, if spelling words for this game are taken from all areas of academic work.

For instance, at the 1957 summer session at Eau Claire Wisconsin laboratory school, the writer would have a social studies text, a science text, a reading book, and a "general" library book on his desk.

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Before the game started, in planning sessions, the children had remarked that there were differences in spelling abilities as in other abilities. The pitcher on a baseball team is never as good a hitter as the other members of his team. So the writer kept the prerogative of picking words with two things in mind: (1) the ability of the student, and (2) the length or strength of the base hit.

Thus, to give an example, a good speller could come to the table and draw an out. It was marked up for his team. He went to his seat. But if he drew a triple from the box, the teacher would shout gleefully, "Ah-Hah! You're a science bug, so your triple word comes from the science text." (The class usually shouted with him.) And then, according to his ability, the teacher would throw him a word commensurate with the "difficulty" of the hit.

Suppose the poor speller also drew a home run. He does have an interest, it is supposed, and a word is given within that interest. Admittedly, he cannot hit a home-run as easily as the good speller, but when he does, one can almost measure the radiation from his features. Success is wonderful. But it is in the walks and singles that the poor speller shines. A walk or single can be a very easy word, and the poor speller can score runs just as easily here, although not as dramatically as the home run.

The base work is the same as in the game baseball. Chalk can be used to mark first, second, third base, and home plate on the floor of the room. If the child draws a single, and spells the easier word correctly, he goes to first base. It is then up to his classmates to further his progress. The next child can hit a triple, which would

score him, hit a double which would put him on third, or walk or hit a single, which would advance him to second. Three outs could be drawn, and he could "die" on base. This is not his fault.

Spelling *is* a school subject, and this game is played to help children spell. It is very important, then, for the children to listen to the child's attempt to spell. If the player misspells the word, the teacher spells the word correctly, making sure the children get *this* part of the game. Teacher's spelling of the word makes for self-competition; no word is used twice, if possible, that day. The teacher can also give the child the prerogative of writing the word on the blackboard or spelling it orally; this difference is made considering that most attempts at spelling in everyday life are not in the realm of oral spelling.

The writer has tried these variations: the walk could be free—in other words, no spelling here at all. This would give a complete non-speller a chance. The non-speller could draw his walk and, not having to spell a word, could contribute his share. It is true that his chances are small, but it *is* possible, and this is all the non-speller asks.

The game could very easily be adapted for arithmetic, although not with the variety as in spelling; social studies, health, science, or other texts cannot be used as word sources. But a single could be a simple addition, or a double subtraction, or a home run difficult division or multiplication. Any number of variations are possible.

The game stimulates children. It gives them the "spelling-bee" feeling and yet as each spelling word is individual, the competition is completely with themselves.

They like it because the game has equality; the poor speller draws an out and goes to his seat with no sense of shame—that's the way the ball bounces. If he draws a walk or single he stands a good chance of success. And yet the high achiever in spelling is challenged also: the word can be very hard—and there may be poor spellers on base.

The game satisfies many areas considered good education for spelling: self-

competition, interest, needs, drill, words from all subject areas, and, above all, it is non-discriminatory.

And it *does* stimulate interest: so much so that there *were* times this writer and teacher wished he had never helped the children create it! But if you would like to build up so much interest in spelling that the children beg to work in that area, try this variation of the baseball-spelling game. The children will love it.

NEAL R. EDMUND

Do Intermediate Grade Pupils Write about Their Problems?

Frequent mention has been made in the literature that elementary school children will employ writing as a means of reducing emotional tensions. Some claims have been made that children will write about their personal problems, their fears and their worries if given an opportunity. This study was made to determine the extent to which intermediate grade pupils involve their personal problems, fears, and worries as suitable topics for written compositions in school.

A selection of 64 pupils, 33 fifth graders and 31 sixth graders, was drawn at random from a large suburban Pennsylvania school system. Pupils in the selection were required to list five or more personal problems, things they worried about

and feared. After one week elapsed, they were given an assignment to write a composition on a topic of their own choice.

Problems were defined as situations pupils wanted to change or deficiencies they wanted to overcome. Fears included objects, situations, ideas, persons, and animals which pupils referred to as threatening to them. Worry was defined as concern over realities or non-realities which persisted over a long period of time.

Problems listed by the pupils ranged from failure to keep up with school work to sickness in the family. The five most frequent categories were as follows:

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1. Failing school work
2. Getting along with brothers and sisters
3. Making and keeping friends
4. Appearance
5. Shyness and nervousness

24 pupils	36	per cent
24 pupils	36	per cent
22 pupils	34	per cent
8 pupils	12.5	per cent
6 pupils	9	per cent

Among the fears most frequently mentioned were:

1. Darkness (being alone in the dark)	15 pupils or 23 per cent
2. Failing school work	12 pupils or 19 per cent
3. Snakes	11 pupils or 17 per cent
4. Dogs	9 pupils or 14 per cent
5. Death and personal injuries	8 pupils or 12.5 per cent

(* Per cents do not total one hundred because each pupil responded more than once.)

It was extremely interesting to find that 50 of the 64 pupils worried about failing school work, while only 24 pupils actually feared the prospects of failing. Other frequently mentioned worries were:

1. Losing friends	12 pupils
2. The future	14 pupils
3. Being sick or hurt	11 pupils
4. Sickness in the family	10 pupils
5. Losing pets	5 pupils

That pupils in the intermediate grades have problems, worries, and fears is obviously a fact of life; that they will profitably write about them is a question. The writing responses of pupils in the present study were as follows:

1. Five of the 64 pupils wrote about topics involving their problems, 59 did not.
2. Five wrote about situations reflecting their worries, 59 did not.
3. Three wrote about some aspects of their fears, 61 did not.

If these findings are indicative of general intermediate grade practice, it appears unmistakable that children do not vent their emotions through writing compositions in school.

Why elementary school children do not write about their personal concerns more frequently and the value of such writing for mental health is beyond the scope of this paper. On the other hand, if we can logically and psychologically defend the thesis that writing has some therapeutic benefit for children, we need to find ways to persuade them to write more freely about what concerns them most. It would seem that the problems, worries, and fears of children as determined by the present study supply interesting information about children's thinking, as well as valuable resources for their writing. However, children must be taught to use this resource as they are taught to use any other resource. The extent to which writing becomes therapeutic may well be related to the ability of the teacher to be a therapist. In fact, such teaching calls for the best kind of teacher-pupil relations. Indeed, this appears to be an area for further professional study and less unsubstantiated opinion.

The Role of Interest in Improving Reading Skills

Reading, as most teachers know it, is a complicated process involving the coordination of many physical and intellectual skills and attitudes. Numerous studies are available which suggest that unless this or that skill is faithfully and systematically taught throughout the elementary grades, effective reading will be slow to develop. Now it strikes the writer that the process of learning to read well is not unlike the process of learning to drive an automobile. Initially, the learner feels a need; and in order to satisfy this need it becomes necessary to master a few basic skills. In the process of mastering these skills each learner utilizes the movements and techniques which work best for him. Unused or unnecessary steps in the process of learning are discarded. From this point on, actual learning stops and perfecting begins.

Classroom teachers and reading specialists recognize the importance of pupil attitude and interest in the learning situation. Every teacher has noticed the effect a truly interesting story has had on a class of young readers. At such a time there is little need to motivate or attempt to add artificial interest to the reading situation. Discipline and other problems vanish while the story is being read. There is no mystery in the fact that some reading texts are not only accepted, but actually looked forward to by young readers; while others are given at best a cool reception. Children are not interested in multi-colored illustra-

tions (despite widely-held popular opinion by many educators to this effect), nor are they interested in phonic or other approaches; what does interest children are fast moving stories of adventure, mystery, sports, and real life situations.

In addition to being interesting, the vocabulary of a suitable book should approximate the student's reading level. This level is easily determined by means of one of many excellent standardized reading tests available to teachers. Vocabulary levels are necessary in assigning students to reading groups, but they can be useful beyond this function. Many writers have compiled lists of library and reference books by grade reading level. Ruth Strang's *Gateway to Readable Books* is an excellent example of one such list. A complete reading program would include the provision of books for every child at his reading and interest level. If books are not available in the school library, they can be obtained without charge from the local public library. The writer used the outcomes of this approach to reading for his Master's Thesis.

During the fall of 1957 the writer undertook a teaching position in the Owatonna, Minnesota, Public Schools. At that time many questions occurred to him, among which were the following: What types of books do students like best? How

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can students be helped to select books which they will be able to read? If each student is helped to find the best possible selection of books for him, and if he is encouraged to begin an intensive program of reading, what effect would such a program have upon gains in basic reading skills, *i.e.* comprehension, vocabulary, and speed? In cooperation with the Graduate School at Mankato State College a study was planned to answer these questions.

Two groups of twenty-five students each were selected from sixth grades in Owatonna Elementary Schools. One group was to serve as the experimental group, the other the control group. Care was taken to assure that both groups were similar in terms of background, intelligence, reading ability, and school experience. T-values were calculated and it was found that the two groups were sufficiently similar to be used in the experiment.

The backgrounds and school histories of both groups were equated by referring to information contained in each student's individual cumulative record file. To determine the intelligence quotients of both groups the *Kuhlman-Anderson* group survey Form F was administered. It was found that the median I.Q. of the experimental group was 108, with a range of from 92 to 124. For the control group the median I.Q. was 109, with a range of from 80 to 120. To determine the pre-study reading ability of both groups, the *Gates Reading Survey, Form I* was administered.

After students who expressed a desire to improve their reading, and who had been selected for the experimental group were assembled, the nature of the study

was explained. Each child was asked to choose the three kinds of stories he liked best. It was found that adventure stories, mysteries, and family stories were the most popular with this group. Using this information, test results, and *Gateway to Readable Books* as a guide, each child was helped to select the books that were best suited to his ability and interest.

During the sixteen weeks of the experiment, each child was asked to read as many books as possible. Informal checks were carried out to be certain that books taken were actually being read. No charts or other type of extrinsic motivational device was used. The children were seen to be greatly interested in the project and many expressed deepest satisfaction with the books they were reading. During the study every attempt was made to provide similar instruction and school experiences for the control group. The only significant difference was the reading program undertaken by the experimental group. Following the completion of the sixteen-week reading program, the post-study reading ability of both groups was determined by means of the *Gates Reading Survey Form II*.

Findings

At the close of the study it was found that the experimental group had achieved significantly greater gains in reading comprehension, speed, and vocabulary, than did the control group. At the start of the study it was assumed that the control group would gain an average of about four-tenths of one year for the sixteen weeks of the study. They did in fact gain exactly that amount. The experimental group, however, gained eight-tenths of one year. This

group averaged *twice* the gain indicated by the control group. For the control group the net gains in reading skills were as follows: vocabulary .40, comprehension .39, speed .42. For the experimental group the net gains were the following: vocabulary .58, comprehension .86, speed .87. In addition, a positive correlation of .70 existed between the relative number of books read by the individual members of the experimental group, and their gains

in the above-mentioned reading skills following the study.

Although there is more to teaching reading than merely finding the right book for a student and turning him loose, by the time a child of average or above average reading ability reaches the upper elementary level, he is ready to dig into the right book for the sheer pleasure of reading.

HELEN DANFORTH

First Aid in Children's Writing

Never in the history of the world has it been more essential that people think straight and deep, and express their thoughts convincingly. A strong language arts program is the prime need in all education today, since acquiring and sharing knowledge are almost wholly dependent on the spoken and written word.

Writing skills will be embellished by spelling insight and practice, assistance in producing rapid, legible, and lovely handwriting, and attention to the conventions of word usage, capitalization, and punctuation. But these are tools, not substance.

Real writing will be done for many purposes, all of which can be classified as either communicative or personal expression, with the boundary between the two not rigidly fixed.

Communicative writing clearly includes reports, letters, newspaper and magazine features, and certain stories and poems. Personal writing includes other stories and poems, diaries, introspective essays, dreams, reminiscences, and various

art forms with which the writer experiments for his own satisfaction, much as a composer, painter, or photographer attempts many works which will never be shared with the public.

With pre-adolescents the teacher's aim, transcending all lesser considerations, is to keep each child writing. One hopes, of course, that most children's written expression will well up from within, based on experience, awareness, and the undeniable urge to create. Every teacher knows, however, that there are times when a child's own resources fail, and he needs befriending so that the flow of creativity may re-establish itself in its own good time.

A teacher properly has at her disposal first aid equipment to help the child when he is disabled. I like to think of the equipment as splints, crutches, and antibiotics. I never use them on well children (and they do not want them), and the treatment is reduced and withdrawn as healthy ex-

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pression begins to flow.

Here is the current inventory of my growing collection:

1. Picture file. I am collecting "pictures with a story in them" which a child may leaf through until he feels a stirring of ideas. Strangely, the ideas are, as often as not, unrelated to any picture, but the child has been spared the panicky blocking of waiting helplessly for thoughts to come.

2. Phrase file. On small oak tag cards I have nearly a hundred phrases. A child may select one, two, or three (face up), or draw three unknowns and weave them into a story plot. Typical examples: a bag of popcorn, a magic potion, a winged creature, noise in the night, and unexpected visitor.

3. Opening sentence file. These are culled regularly from successful compositions of previous years, plus any I am able to concoct or steal. The ones below are all from pupils:

"Once there was a little boy who loved snow, until one day."

"Mr. Jones had a car, and what a car it was!"

"Even the other ghosts were frightened!"

"The Smiths are a most unusual family."

"Willie the whale was just an ordinary whale, except that he wore a top hat and drove a taxicab."

4. Title file. Some of the phrase cards make good titles, and in addition former pupils have given me the following:

The Runaway

The Little People

What I See from My Front Door

Enchanted Haircut

The Trouble with Grownups

5. Stock stimuli. All of the following, properly presented, have helped individuals and groups to more varied, more penetrating observation and writing:

the feel of autumn
what it means to be trustworthy
memories of another grade
rain in November
"I used to think . . ."

6. Other devices are rather too mechanical, but have served a purpose when widely spaced and used with appropriate caution:

- a) Home work assignment. Retell to your family the anecdote about Miss Danforth's father and the rattlesnake. Ask them to tell you some of *your* family's stories. In class, write a good story you heard.
- b) The following is put on the board: "A little boy/girl stood in the doorway of the kindergarten. She/he held her/his hands behind her/his back. The teacher came forward, smiling. 'What do you have?' she said." Through group discussion we develop that the kindergartner and the teacher may be made vivid and interesting, and that a fine climax is possible when the hidden object is divulged. Then the children write.
- c) Pretend you are an animal or another person and describe yourself. Perhaps you could tell one of your adventures.
- d) The situation is this. A space ship has circled our playground and come in for a landing. A hatch opens, and something or someone emerges. How do you feel and what do you do?

More and better items for the infirm-ary are always welcome. However, like the public health nurse, I count those seasons most successful when the splints, crutches, and antibiotics are hardly ever used!

Handwriting and Children's Writing

Research in handwriting in America has been directed at problems of the efficient and legible formation of letters and words within a given language structure. In Europe, much more attention has been paid to the study of handwriting as an expressive act which reveals the character, temperament, education, vocation, and sex of the individual doing the writing. Up to the present, however, little attention has been paid in any country to the effect the writer's perception of the various cognitive, social, and personal dimensions of his writing task has on his handwriting and conversely, no one has paid much attention to the relationship the writer's perception of his handwriting—its form, standard of quality, physical and physiological limitations, etc., has on his willingness to write, his style, and his form and control of writing.

In this review of the research in handwriting, therefore, little attention will be paid to the numerous surveys of instructional practices in handwriting or to the extensive European and American research in graphology. For excellent reviews of present practice in the teaching of handwriting, the interested reader is referred to the following references (31, 57, 18, 38). For representative references to graphology see (62, 24, 26, 36, 14). An attempt is made here to confine attention to the studies which bear as directly as possible on the nature and function of handwriting in written language.

Handwriting Has To Do With A Given Language and Its Conventions of Letter Formation

One of the hard facts of handwriting is that its form and capacity to communicate is determined by the nature and structure of the particular language being used. Think, for example, what would happen if one would try

to transpose the left to right movement, connected script, letter and word spacing and finger-arm movements necessary to English to the writing of Chinese, Arabic, Hebrew, or German script.

In America (23) English has been the common language and the cursive and manuscript letter styles have been the context within which writing development of children took place. Of course great variation has existed of cursive styles. Handwriting remains a personal act. Owens (56) pointed out that intra-individual differences were greater when the motor performances of the same person were compared than when inter-individual differences were compared among the performances of different persons on the same motor performance. This suggests that the different phases of writing performance in the same person may show greater variability than comparisons of different individuals on the same writing phase. Owens showed further that variations between repetitions of the same motor act by the same person would be one-seventh to one-eighth the magnitude of individual differences. This discussion and subsequent researches show that one important learning task in the development of handwriting is the internalizing of the normative limits within which an individual will control the variation of his own handwriting performance. This development is not likely to be the product of a single writing style or of the efforts of a single teacher or school year. Three aspects of perception seem to be important in this process—

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perception of form, perception of limits of adequate control in form, and perception of a level of aspiration. Little research (44) has been done on this phase of handwriting.

Breitkopf (10) in studying the intra-individual graphological differences in the writing of 200 men could account for them only on the basis of 1) the principle of special affinities for certain modes of expression, 2) the principle of the significance of the situation for the individual, and 3) the principle of the specific expression as part of the whole expression complex. Dorothy Leggitt (49) proposed that learning to write is the general adaptation of the handwriting movement to a gradually developing perception of form and showed in her study that training in the recognition of basic stroke characters in letter formation improved the handwriting of 15 junior high school remedial writing cases. Treanor (69) showed the effect of establishing a self defined level of writing aspiration on the compositions of an English class. Cole (15) based her whole program of writing instruction on the process of "self-analysis."

The point of the above studies is further underscored by Crider (20) who showed that handwriting is a language and that it is influenced by physiological, psychological, and personality factors. Birge (6) and Wells (22) point out, however, that while the intra-variations of an individual's handwriting cannot be explained purely on the basis of differences in a motor skill and that personality, perceptions of aspirational norms, and psychological factors do contribute to them. The corollary of this conclusion—namely that handwriting can differentiate personal histories and personality traits—is not necessarily true. Bracken, (9) through comparing the writing behavior (pressure) of twins (identical and fraternal) showed that there was no greater similarity between the writing of identical pairs of twins than there were between non-identical twins. He concludes that his study does not support the

inheritance of the characteristic of writing. Garth (33, 34) through his studies of the handwriting of Negroes and Indians shows that when age and school grade are equated, both Negro and Indian children write as legibly and as rapidly as do white children. These groups of studies suggest that we place less emphasis on heredity and ethnic factors and more on the cognitive, aspirational, and perception aspects of learning in the task of learning to write and in the use of penmanship as a tool for writing.

Little Agreement on Ways Letters Are to be Formed

The ways in which children are taught to use to form words, phrases, and sentences play an important role in a child's writing and in programs of writing instruction. Most people assume that all programs of instruction are universally agreed on the way upper case, lower case, and numerals are formed in both manuscript and cursive systems of handwriting. Most people assume also that there is ample evidence supporting advocated letter symbols. Unfortunately both assumptions have little foundation in fact.

The concept that handwriting is primarily a tool of communication and that legibility should be the major criterion has resulted in a trend toward simplicity in letter and numeral forms. In most cases "simple" is defined as the form most appropriate to the development of children. How this was determined is seldom if ever made clear. It is probable that most symbol forms were determined primarily by adult logical analysis of what seemed to be the easiest method of producing a given letter or numeral. The answer to the question, "Should common letters and numerals be taught?" is, therefore, in doubt. If simplicity is to be the criterion of choice, the question becomes: "simple to whom?" What is simple to one child may clearly be far from simple to another.

Surveys of practice and contrasting studies of good and poor handwriting using legibility as a major criterion have identified three major

groups of factors which seem to differentiate good and poor writing: 1) quality and economy of letter formation (speed while always a factor here is considered least important); 2) the relationships and uniformity of letter and word formation (size of letters, alignment, line quality, proportion, spacings, beginnings and endings); and 3) the relationship of the position of the individual to the act of writing and his writing behavior 73, 32, 3. (pp. 22-30). These findings and those which follow, while revealing the importance of "proper" letter formation and alignment, also show that no single element in writing behavior is sufficient in itself to differentiate individual samples of writing. The totality of the writing act is clearly more than the simple sum of its parts.

The studies by Pressey (58), Newland (53, 52), Boraas (8) of the illegibilities in the writing of children and adults offer further information on problems of the formation of writing symbols. Pressey's analysis of 3,000 illegibilities found that 12 per cent of them involved the letter *r*. Seven letters, *r*, *u*, *e*, *a*, *o*, *s* and *t*, accounted for over half of the difficulties in reading. Five malformations—*n* like *u*, *r* like *i*, *e* closed, *d* like *cl*, *c* like *a*, accounted for one-fourth of these difficulties. Newland found that *S*, *O*, *2*; *a*, *e*, *r*, and *t*; and writing *e* like *i* caused most of the illegibilities of writing. Four types of difficulties in letters caused over one-half of all illegibilities: a) failure to close letters, b) closing looped strokes, c) looping non-looped strokes, and d) straight up rather than rounded strokes. Boraas' study shows why the curved letters with no distinguishing characteristic cause most of the illegibilities. All agree that letters *r*, *e*, and *a* are the major trouble makers (65, 60).

Other Factors and Conditions in the Writing Act

The anatomy and physiology of the hand has naturally come in for its share of attention in the study of handwriting. Callewaert (13) in analysis of the anatomy of the hand and its

movement identifies two basic movements necessary for writing: 1) movements of the index finger, thumb, and the middle finger in forming the single letter (inscriptive function) and 2) the movement of the hand along the line (cursive function). Good handwriting, then, according to Callewaert, grows out of the coordination of the inscriptive function and the cursive function of the fingers and forearm thus insuring good formation of letters, natural slant, and flow of the writing along the line. Unfortunately the studies by Woodworth (78) and Myers (51) are not supportive of Callewaert or of each other. Meyers measured the various dimensions of the hand and found its volume by inserting the subject's hand into a calibrated container partially filled with water. While he claimed a "more or less fixed relationship between writing quality and hand measurement," careful examination of his data by the author revealed little or no support for this conclusion. There is no research known to the author which demonstrates any factor related to the physiology or anatomy of the hand which is critical in good writing other than that any normal hand and arm is necessary in the act of writing.

Rowley (61) followed this general line of inquiry and examined the role of low muscle coordination in the production of slow cramped illegible handwriting. Measures of tapping, horizontal and vertical arm movements, and finger movements as measures of muscle coordination showed that slow-cramped handwriting was not the result of low muscle coordination but more likely due to training. Ames (1) in studying the postural and placement orientations of young children showed that the place of their initial writing on the paper moves from lower right to center, to top center, to top left. The passive hand moves from bottom left (2-3 yrs.) to center left (4 yrs.) to top left (5-6 yrs.) to center left (7 yrs.) to bottom left or off paper (8-10 yrs.).

Brogden (11) shows that the most efficient

angle of pursuit lies between 135° — 160° . The most difficult is 45° to 70° . This finding, supporting slanted handwriting, agrees with other studies.

It is likely from this that given a healthy child and the opportunity for him to make intelligent adaptations in his orientations to the writing act, good handwriting is a matter of learning and not simply one of motor coordination and psychology.

Townsend (68) realizing that the beginning handwriting of young children is drawing and copying before it becomes a smooth coordinated means for the expression of ideas studied the copying ability in children. His population was 287 New York school children aged six years one month to nine years three months. His tests were copying tests of geometric figures, form perception tests, and various tests of motor behavior. He concluded that copying skill was closely related to chronological and mental age up to the age 7 and 8, then copying showed errors which were not attributable to differences in these variables, but rather to individuals, and different writing tasks. This suggests that unless comprehension and purpose of the writing soon becomes an important part of writing instruction, the child's ability to copy will not carry him much beyond the writing tasks of the first grade.

Surveys of instructional practice reveal that the experience of teachers with children has agreed with Townsend's finding. Floyd (28) in his survey found that seventy per cent of the sampled teachers, provide many opportunities for every child to write in ways that are purposeful.

The problem of how to move from copying to rapid efficient writing has been related during the past half century to the three components of the velocity or speed of the writing movement, the kind of written stroke (vertical, slanted, horizontal, up-down, left-right, right-left, curved, etc.), and the pressure phenomena. Binet and Courtier (5) in 1893 using

unusually modern methods concluded that the velocity of the hand is modified by four principal factors—size of letter, combination of the letters, the nature of the stroke being made, and the direction of the stroke. One specific conclusion of importance to the question of the nature and role of rhythm in handwriting is Binet's observation that one cannot voluntarily force one's hand to move with uniform velocity.

Kircher (48) examined the nature of handwriting development over the eight grade school years with special attention to the first year. Some of his conclusions are important and correspond with recent studies. Maturity in handwriting expresses itself in less and more even pressure (41, 40); the velocity of movement (travel time per millimeter) becomes almost constant with considerable practice; the greater part of writing time is consumed in pauses; and greatest pressure is exerted in the last down stroke.

Dietrick (22) examined carefully the six characteristics of size of letters, width of letters, length difference of letters, way in which letters and words are joined, degree to which letters and words are joined, and angle of slant to see if they are related to each other according to certain laws.

He found that the size of letters is the most important characteristic in regularly occurring relation with other characteristics. Size, width, and angle are closely related. There is no relation between size and the way letters are joined together. Pauses between letters cause larger, narrower, and slower writing. If a person writes fast, he is more likely to have a consistent relation between these six factors; if he writes slowly, the writing is more likely to be unnatural and more under the influence of a certain model. All this suggests the importance of helping the child to move beyond copying to the development of his own patterning or style of the writing act—an act which becomes an integrated complex of form, speed, and relationships in letters, words, and space. The

unifying element must be meaning, since neither letters, strokes, nor words have a common uniform velocity or rhythm.

Rhythm in Handwriting

The introduction of cursive handwriting in our elementary schools usually follows a definite system of procedures. The only outstanding characteristic which is common to all is the dependence upon rhythm and the rhythmic count. The three most frequently used systems—Palmer Method, Zaner-Bloser, and the New Laurel all recommend counting and having practice in "correct rhythm." It is common practice to develop a series of melodies or rhythmic sayings to aid in the practice of handwriting. It seems important to review the research on what seems to be a universal practice in handwriting instruction.

Drever (25), using apparatus devised by Judd, made one of the early studies of the mechanism of the writing act. Using grip pressure as his referent, he found rhythm was absent from the child's early writing and appears about age eleven. In adults, the rhythm is extremely regular. "The writing has ceased to be drawing—rhythmical point pressures correspond to rhythmical variations in grip pressure—and are analogous to a certain extent to the rhythm of speech." Rhythm here is not the rhythm of time but a rhythm or regularity of pressure exerted on point and grip of the writing instrument.

Studies by Nutt (54) and West (74) tend to accept the presence of a timed rhythm in handwriting and attempt to discover its relation to age (Nutt) and how it can be influenced by timing (West). It is hard to determine what is called rhythm by each author. West suggests his definition when he says, "... good writers among adults made less variation from their average length of time both on the up stroke and down stroke as well as on the total of both than poor writers, but very poor writers may show better natural rhythm than most good writers." While this statement

helps suggest his criterion of what constitutes rhythm, his conclusion about its presence in good and poor writing is confusing to say the least.

The best study on the problem is the one made by Irish (47) in 1948. She measured the actual writing time of each letter, as well as the most frequently used letter combinations, in order to discover whether a rhythmic count would emerge from the timing. Adults were used in order to insure the presence of any possible rhythm pattern. She argued that if handwriting is rhythmical then the time recorded for single letters will vary definitely from letter to letter in accordance with the length of the stroke, the direction of the strokes and the number of strokes. The time recorded for letters in combination or context will remain fairly constant with the time recorded for single letters. Her findings do not show a rhythmic pattern or timing in handwriting. The time for writing any single letter is very close to the time for writing any other. There is a greater range between various measures taken of the same letter in different situations than there is between the measures of different letters. She concludes that the time of writing does not vary, to a degree with the length of stroke, the direction of stroke, or with the number of strokes which would justify a rhythmic count as a teaching procedure. Apparently, our instructional procedures are not in harmony with our research findings.

The Manuscript—Cursive Problem

Most elementary schools in America teach both manuscript and cursive writing. Less than one in twenty-five schools teach either one exclusively. Most schools introduced manuscript writing between the years of 1935 and 1949, with the general practice of starting the instruction of handwriting using manuscript and then between the second half of the second grade and the last half of the fourth grade changing to cursive writing. Thus most children in

America are taught two kinds of letter symbols and two forms of writing.

The arguments for using manuscript symbols rest on three propositions:

First, the straight line, the circle, and spacing forms of the manuscript writing are more in line with the motor and eye-hand-arm coordinations of the young child than are the complex movements and formations of the cursive system. There is plenty of empirical evidence to show that five and six year olds can be taught to write manuscript symbols. There is also some research evidence to support this contention (46, 68, 37).

The second argument bears on the correspondence between the printed symbols the child is learning to read and the manuscript writing symbols often called print-script. Hence the child will not have to learn to read two forms of written language when he is already overwhelmed with the magnitude and complexity of his total learning task. This argument makes sense and facilitates the ease with which all forms of language can be used to support and relate to every other. Most schools which changed to manuscript writing in the primary grades were able to observe a significant increase in the child's story writing when compared with their previous experience with cursive writing.

The third argument in favor of manuscript writing is that it is more legible—an argument well supported by research (70, 30).

The objections to manuscript revolve around five main arguments. First, the common socially accepted form of handwriting is cursive; therefore why teach the child something he will have to change anyway? This duplication is claimed to be wasteful of the child's time in school. The social acceptance of cursive writing is a social value and cannot be judged by research. If duplication is bad, then why teach cursive at all?

Second, there is the claim that manuscript writing is slower and more cramping (tension

producing) than cursive (77, 19, 63, 71, 45). Conrad and Offerman concluded that the factor making manuscript writing less fast was the number of pauses. Increased speed in manuscript was accomplished by cutting down the time of pauses. Winch in examining the data of his six experiments would not take a position that print script was more or less facile than cursive. Hildreth, on the other hand, found that eighth grade pupils copied the unjoined strokes faster than they copied the joined, and concluded that manuscript writing can be as fast as, if not faster than, joined letter writing. The "Correspondent" found the speed decisively in favor of the unjoined hand. Washburne and Morphett (91) found cursive a little faster than manuscript up to the junior high school period when manuscript becomes somewhat faster. Thus the evidence on comparative speed seems to be inconclusive. One is about as fast as the other. Under extreme increases in speed, the quality of the manuscript writing deteriorates less rapidly than cursive.

Third, the evidence on cramping and increased tension in handwriting is meager and completely inadequate. No one has been able to devise a good measure of tension or cramping.

Fourth, there is the claim that the manuscript signature is not legal. Manuscript signatures are legal in most states if it is the usual signature of the individual concerned.

Fifth, manuscript writing has been criticized because of its lack of individuality and character. There are many samples of individual and artistic writing using manuscript symbols both in England and America. On the other hand, it is probably much easier to get consistency, and uniformity, in manuscript, and thus high legibility.

A recent comparative study by Templin (66) of three different writing styles of 454 high school graduates in 1946 from twenty communities located on the eastern seaboard gave promise of shedding light on the effect

that different writing styles have on the nature and quality of adult writing. Unfortunately a microfilm of the thesis could not be obtained and her abstract had to be used for review purposes. On the basis of her abstract, the two major hypotheses: 1) that the legibility of adult handwriting may be affected significantly by the extent to which handwriting is used, by the sex of the writer, and by occupation held by the writer; and 2) that manuscript writing in adult life is more legible than cursive handwriting, could not be substantiated. Perhaps in adult life, the handwriting style itself is not particularly important. The adult may make his own writing style do whatever he wants to accomplish with it. Perhaps more can be done with this problem.

The Transition of Manuscript to Cursive

As has been indicated, most elementary school children change from manuscript to cursive somewhere between the second and fourth grade. It is important, therefore, to determine the effect of early training on later writing (21, 35), the most effective time for change (2), and the procedure which assists in the transition (12). Goetsch and Crider agree with the previous studies of Washburne and Morphet that children can easily make the shift from either cursive to manuscript and vice versa. Learning of one assists in the learning of the other. Arnold, on the basis of records of students in the Germantown Friends School kept over an eight year period, concluded that the fourth grade was about the best time to make the change. No tables or other data are presented to show the basis and evidence for this conclusion.

Again, the author of this review could find no adequate research on the problem of when to make the transition; no adequate criterion is presented which would allow the statement that the second, fourth, and sixth grade is best. The best time is probably determined by the

nature of the instructional program, the convenience of teachers, and the convictions of the teaching staff and community rather than factors in the development and learning of children.

The suggestions (64) for teachers trying to help children make this transition are: 1) help children understand and practice what they are trying to do, 2) do not let joining spoil the clear simplicity of letters, 3) keep "packing" of letters close and in general, 4) avoid loops.

The Left Handed Child

The left-handed child faces many unique difficulties in learning to write. The Wisconsin Survey showed that 62 per cent of all schools studied reported that no special provisions were made for the left-handed child. Of those that did, only one procedure was common to a large number—that of allowing writing to slant to the left. Other procedures mentioned were reversed lighting, special manuals, reversed position and grip, and stub pen points. In general, five groups of suggestions were made as to ways to provide for left-handed writers: 1) body position, 2) use of equipment, 3) special aid in letter formation, 4) special seating arrangement, and 5) special equipment. The lack of help given the left-handed writer is further confirmed by the New York study (7).

Guilford (39) confirms what is the general observation—left handed children do not rank on par, in quality and speed, with those using the right hand. The comment is made that a school situation planned for right-handed writers and the general inability of right-handed teachers to demonstrate a left-handed technique may have had an important role in producing the result.

Cole (16, 17) has written extensively about the problems of left-handed writers and makes many suggestions, based on her analysis of the problem, for their help.

The most recent and perhaps the most com-

prehensive study of the use of the left hand in handwriting has been done by Enstrom (27). He studied 1,103 left-handed writers in grades five through eight. The left-handed writers were classed into two general groups: 1) those who kept the writing hand below the line of writing, and 2) those who kept the writing hand above (wrist hooked). Fifteen different adjustment positions were identified and studied from the point of view of their relative efficiency to produce legible, efficient (speed), and non-smearing handwriting. For those who wrote below the line, three positions proved superior—Position IE—Paper is turned to right (clockwise) more than the reverse of right-handed placement, usually between 60° and 70° with front edge of desk; the angle between axis of forearm and paper ruling is greater than 90° usually 110°; the slant is generally forward. Position ID—Paper placement is reverse of that used by right-handed writers, approximately 30° turn to right; axis of forearm makes 90° angle with paper ruling. Position IF—Paper ruling is 90° with front edge of desk, angle between forearm axis and paper ruling is approximately 130°, / is generally forward. For those who kept hand above line of writing (wrist hooked) only one adjustment proved good (highest in quality but with smearing possibilities). Position IIAA—Paper is turned leftward (counterclockwise) as for right-handed writers. Angle with front edge of desk is usually 30°, there is pronounced hooking of wrist and writing hand above line of writing, wrist is turned on edge, movement is predominantly wrist flexing with some finger action.

This study gives us the first real evidence on the nature of desirable positions for the left-handed writer. The three superior positions identified by Enstrom suggest that the trend of practice of recent years is in the right direction and that the further exploration of the relationships of arm, wrist, writing instrument, and paper marked out by Enstrom will gradu-

ally remedy the present injustices being done to left-handed children.

Handwriting Instruments and Materials

Down through the ages (50) handwriting has been tied up intimately with the development of writing surfaces, instruments, and media. Relatively speaking, astonishingly little comparative progress has been made in writing instrumentation and materials. Man's writing instruments and materials are not too different from what they were 100 years ago.

The Wisconsin Survey (3) (page 39) of the specific instruments used in handwriting programs found the following in indicated order: adult pencil, beginner pencil, fountain pen, chalk, crayon, ball point pen, pen and holder, and the mechanical pencil.

The adult pencil is most frequently used, with fountain and ball point pens increasing in use. The least used instruments are the mechanical pencil and the pen holder and steel nib. In a study of instrument preference, Herrick (42) found that the preferred writing instruments were, fountain pen, ball point pen, and adult pencil. Otto (55) found that in 1948, the majority of large city school systems still restricted the initial use of ink to the pen holder and steel pen. In slightly more than one-half of the schools, however, permissive use of fountain pens was given. Wiles (76) showed that there is no evidence to support the use of the beginner's pencil as an initial writing instrument for children. What evidence there is favors the size of the adult pencil. Whittaker (75) in his study of the efficiency of steel pens and fountain pens found that fountain pens produced writing of higher quality and were preferred by children as writing instruments. The evidence seems to support the use of fountain and ball point pens in programs of writing instruction.

Herrick (43) in a study of the essential characteristics of writing instrument design (shape, thickness, weight, center of gravity,

point of grip, and angles of inclination and rotation) for both children and adults showed that human preferences indicated a round instrument slightly less than half an inch in diameter, a weight of approximately 18.5 grams, center of gravity between two to three inches from writing tip, point of grip averaged 1.22 inches from point of instrument and that there was little or no difference in sex preferences.

Three sizes of paper are generally used in handwriting periods, the half size or extra large with one inch and one-half inch spacing in kindergarten and grades one and two and the regular size (8½x11) with 3/8 inch spacing for all upper grades. Newsprint, easels, and blackboards are commonly used in writing in the primary grades.

There is considerable evidence that adult type writing instruments and materials suitably adapted to their use by children will be in common use in schools. It is probably more important that the writing instrument be efficient and of suitable length than that it represent a unique size or shape.

This Matter of Quality

The common scales for evaluating handwriting are the Ayres (4), Freeman (29), and West (73, 67) scales all developed over twenty years ago. Yet the need to develop a more effective means for helping the child and his teacher to evaluate his handwriting still remains before us. Thorndike emphasized the value of a total judgment of the general goodness or merit of a sample of handwriting—a composite of such factors as legibility, beauty, character, etc. Ayres emphasized the point that the major purpose for handwriting is to be read and stressed legibility (readability). Freeman wanted scales to help a teacher or pupil to analyze their handwriting in terms of letter formation, spacing, quality of alignment, and uniformity of slant. Quant (59) used eye movement photography to study the readability of handwriting samples when Freeman's five factors were systematically varied.

He found compactness in spacing and regularity of slant were the ones favoring legibility.

It seems true that no simple single factor of handwriting distinguishes between samples of good and bad handwriting alone. There is plenty of evidence, however, that one can distinguish between two samples of handwriting as to legibility and recognize which is better. As yet it is not possible to point to the single factor essential in this difference. This suggests the importance of more research in this area and the increasing need for means which will enable the child to make constructive evaluations of his own writing. It is in this direction that the greatest promise for the future in handwriting development seems to lie.

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The English Language

Edited by THOMAS H. WETMORE



For the past three months what I hope will become a lively monthly conversation about the English language has of necessity been one-sided and editor-monopolized. At the present writing you have not yet received your February issue, in which this feature appears for the first time. By the time I write again, however, I hope that many of you will have picked up your end of the conversation, either through questions or comments.

In the meantime, I would like to continue with some of the half-truths which I frequently encounter in English language classes made up of future elementary and high school teachers. Several such half-truths concern identification of subjects of sentences.

Apparently the most profound statement many students remember about a subject is that it is "the thing in the sentence that you are talking about." Even the poorest ones often are able to parrot this disturbingly vague answer as if it were one of the verities "which wert and art and evermore shall be."

On this subject Professor John Searles of the University of Wisconsin writes very interestingly of his early experiences with teaching ninth graders:

I pointed out so many trees that some of my students couldn't see the woods; I must have spent two-thirds of my classroom time during the first semester on grammar.

Overwhelming my students with details was a serious enough mistake, but

my next mistake was even more serious. I believed whatever the book said. After all, it had presumably been written by experts, and what they said must be right. They said a sentence must have a subject and verb, and it must express a complete thought. Very true. Simply undeniable. They said that every educated person uses complete sentences. Of course. No doubt about it. They said that a noun is the name of a person, place, or thing, and it may be used as the subject of a sentence—the thing that the sentence is about. All other facts of grammar are equally plain. It should be easy to teach these obvious facts, even to ninth graders, so let's have a little grammar lesson, right here.

"Now, class,"—I'm talking to my ninth graders—"please tell me the subject of this sentence: 'Her principal anxiety was her children.' Tommy, what is the sentence about?"

"It's about a woman."

"Wrong. Mary?"

"It's about her children."

"No! The subject is 'anxiety'. Can't you see that? The subject is a noun, the name of a person, place, or thing. Since 'anxiety' isn't a person or place, it must be a thing. Call it a quality or condition if you like. That makes it very easy, doesn't it?"

It doesn't.

"Well, let's try a different approach. The subject is the performer of the action. The indirect object is the person or thing to or for whom or which the action is performed."¹

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¹John Searles, "Why Structural Linguistics?" *Midwest English Review*, 2 (March, 1960), 12.

Professor Searles continues in this manner, concluding that perhaps structural linguistics may have some of the answers to the question that the children understandably could not answer. Let us look first at the source of Tommy and Mary's confusion and then suggest a possible solution to their difficulty.

No one would deny that the subject is the thing that "the sentence is about." The children were right, however, in the feeling that this particular sentence was also about a woman and her children. They might have added further that the word *principal* lets us know that the woman had other anxieties besides her children. If Mary had been studying mathematical equations recently, she might have defended *her children* as subject even after the teacher came out in favor of *anxiety*, for certainly there is some logic in considering the nouns on either side of a linking verb as having approximately the same meaning. (Incidentally, we should set aside some time in the near future for a discussion of the pitfalls of equating grammar and logic.)

It should perhaps be pointed out that in some sentences the simple subject indicates only vaguely, if at all, what we are talking about: for instance, *It's raining* or *It is a good thing that you are going on a vacation*. In fact, we sometimes use the latter of the two patterns in a deliberate attempt to postpone the most meaningful part of the sentence.

No one would deny that sometimes the subject is the performer of the action. Equating subject and performer, however, will only confuse Tommy and Mary when they try to find the subject of *Her principal anxiety was her children*. This subject does not name the performer, but that which is to be identified. Likewise, if the linking verb is followed by an adjective, as in *Mary is beautiful*, then the subject names the person who is identified. In *The ball was given to me*, the subject is the undergoer of the action; and in *I was given the ball*, the subject is the receiver.

If we are going to talk about the meanings of subjects, then would it not be better to list all of the possible meanings: performer, receiver, undergoer, person or thing identified, person or thing described, or any others we may discover? Or better still, why not let the children discover these meanings inductively for themselves before we attempt to make a list?

We should be careful to point out that such terms as receiver, undergoer, and subject are not grammatical categories, but simply indicate relationships in real-life situations. This can be demonstrated by throwing an eraser to a student, over and over if necessary, until the class sees clearly that you are the performer, the student is the receiver, and the eraser is the undergoer. They can then discover for themselves the various grammatical structures that express any one of these relationships. The receiver, for example, may be the subject (*The student was thrown the eraser*), indirect object (*I threw the student the eraser*), the object of a preposition (*I threw the eraser to the student* or *The eraser was thrown to the student*).

It should be clear that meaning gives us little to go on in identifying grammatical categories. How then is the student to identify such items as subjects? Through structural signals.

What structural signals are helpful in the identification of subjects? In simple statements in English there are two: word order and subject-verb agreement.

Word order in languages like Latin is relatively unimportant. *Pueri amanti puellam*, *Puellam amanti pueri*, *Puellam pueri amanti*—all mean that the boys love the girl, for the endings are there to signal subject and object. The same was true for the earlier stages of English. With the loss of the distinctive case endings in English nouns, however, subject-

(Continued on Page 265)

Idea Inventory



Louise H. Mortensen

Most of us take dictionaries for granted, so a look at what has gone into the making of dictionaries would be in order. Those of us who are attached to the old *Webster's Collegiate* which saw us through college have a personal attachment to the volume.* The Merriam-Webster Dictionaries, published in Springfield, Massachusetts, and typical New England products, are derived from a voluminous and original citation file of historical and contemporary data. At present it consists of nearly 7 million 3x5 slips gathered to show words in actual use in all kinds of material—learned publications, trade journals, magazines and newspapers, reviews and reports, mail-order catalogues and house organs, menus, current fiction and nonfiction, anything printed in English. These dictionaries are direct descendants of Noah Webster's *An American Dictionary of the English Language*, completed in 1828.

Noah Webster was born in Connecticut when it was still a colony of England. He was only 17 years old when the Declaration of Independence was signed and 25 when the war with the mother-country ended. As a schoolmaster, lawyer, lecturer, pamphleteer, and publisher of textbooks he had always believed firmly that America had a future of her own, which would grow out of unity in the American language and unity in government. After compiling the famous *Elementary Spelling Book*, which came to be known as the *Blue-Back Speller*, through the sale of which he derived his income, he began work in 1800 on

his first dictionary, which was printed in 1806.

Noah Webster graduated from Yale and credited the Reverend Elizur Goodrich, one of the trustees of Yale, with suggesting that he compile a dictionary. Chauncey A. Goodrich, grandson of the preacher, became Noah Webster's son-in-law. Webster was interested in the new American words, entirely separate from the vocabulary of Englishmen, such as *skunk*, *hickory*, *chowder*, *scow*, *applesauce*, *bull-frog*, *steamboat*, words which had been growing into usage as the country grew. The old dictionaries gave no definitions for such words, and Webster, who had begun a study of the American language with his *Speller*, used his enormous fund of knowledge and collection of notes to compile his dictionary. In these days of filing-cabinets, we are accustomed to references, but we marvel at the many references this young man of the 19th century had with which to work, plus a brilliant mind and retentive memory. He filled all the margins of his books with notes and kept his accumulated citations in excellent order. His large dictionary of 1828 took 20 years to compile, with 70,000 listings, including a whole vocabulary of Americanisms never before listed in any dictionary. By 1828 many of these words had been in current usage for over a century, and Noah Webster felt they were eligible for his dictionary. The only word ever coined was *demoralize*, a common word today, and significant of Webster's strict Calvinism.

Mrs. Mortensen has degrees in English from Smith College and Columbia, with special work at the University of Iowa, New York University, and Drake University.

*Mrs. Mortensen will continue her discussion of school dictionaries next month.

On publication of the 1828 volume, Webster was already 70 years of age. His work was filled with some unorthodoxies of spelling, pronunciation, and usage, and it was three-quarters of a century before Beacon Hill and Cambridge would care to accept Webster. However, this 1828 dictionary immediately became the standard dictionary in English in Germany; the British courts began to cite the volume on points not covered by Samuel Johnson's dictionary. In this country publishers, courts, legislatures, colleges, and schools started using it as an authority. When Webster was 80 years old, he began a revision which came out in 1841, with 5,000 more words, many of them scientific terms.

The interesting thing about the G. & C. Merriam Company is that this firm carried on where Noah Webster left off at his death in 1843. His heirs that year sold the unbound sheets of the 1841 edition to J.S. & C. Adams of Amherst, Mass., but to them it was a white elephant, and they disposed of it to the successful firm of G. & C. Merriam, Springfield, Mass., who were selling "Books, Stationery, and Paperhangings. Wholesale and Retail." The Merriams contracted with the Webster heirs to insure their rights to publish revisions, and became the sole owners of Webster's *American Dictionary of the English Language*. Being keen merchandisers, they immediately planned a revision to sell at \$6.00, aimed at a quantity market, but insured its quality by making Webster's son-in-law, Professor Chauncey A. Goodrich of Yale, editor-in-chief. With him on the staff was Webster's son, William G. Webster, Professor Noah Porter of Yale, and a whole corps of specialists in science and the arts. Their *New Revised Edition* appeared in 1847, the first of the Merriam-Webster Dictionaries. It contained 85,000 entries. This edition was highly endorsed by President Polk and Members of Congress, but at this period there was a rival lexicographer named Joseph E. Worcester, a scholar and former associate of

Webster in favor at Harvard and Boston. Worcester was not a reformer of usage, and his dictionary was more conservative.

Partly because of rivalry with Worcester, a great revision of the Merriam-Webster Dictionary was begun in 1859 and finished in 1864. President Noah Porter of Yale was editor-in-chief. A German philologist, Dr. C. A. F. Mahn, overhauled the entire etymology of the original Webster dictionaries. The list of editors was a distinguished roster of over thirty university professors and scientists, besides readers in New Haven, Springfield, and Boston, commissioned to make citations of words found in publications. With its publication, the 1864 edition was hailed by the statesmen in Washington. The Government Printing Office hung up signs for its editors, compositors, and proof-readers, "FOLLOW WEBSTER." Textbook publishers issued millions of copies of schoolbooks based on Webster. Even in Boston, which had favored the Worcester dictionary, the literary group began to acknowledge Webster's superiority in the revised edition. West Point cadets were furnished with a copy of Webster for each room. When the early Webster copyrights expired, many unscholarly dictionaries labeled Webster began to appear. Copyrights on the 1847 edition were to end in 1889. For this reason the company planned a complete revision in 1880, which appeared in 1890 under the title *Webster's International Dictionary*, containing some 175,000 listings.

In 1909 came the *New International* with some 400,000 entries, made necessary by the increasing complexity of modern life and defined by over fifty specialists. In the middle '20's a most ambitious project of cooperative scholarship was undertaken under William Allan Neilson as editor-in-chief. Students at Smith College and Mount Holyoke helped check words for the citation file, which is now insured for over \$1,000,000. In this respect the Merriam Company is a unique organization.

(Continued on Page 265)



Alice Sankey

The Popular Arts in the Classroom

Edited by ALICE SANKEY

What, No Library?

In the little suburb of Terry Hills, in New South Wales near the famous beaches of Sydney, Australia, a woman heard an international broadcast from New England. The report described the "boot-strap" growth of a children's library in the mountain village of Cascade, Colorado. A handful of Cascade mothers, concerned because the lack of a library put their eighth-grade graduates at a disadvantage when they entered high school, went into action. Aided and encouraged by the school's three teachers, they commandeered a cloak room and began collecting books. In two and a half years, they acquired 1600 well-rounded, triple-indexed volumes. The books were kept in the name of the Mother's Club, and now that the school has been consolidated, plans are in the offing for turning the project into a community library, and moving four miles up to a village embracing all the Ute Pass area.

A lively correspondence linking two continents has been carried on between the Australian villager and Virginia Stumbough, one of the Cascade mothers. When Mrs. Stumbough attended a luncheon in Chicago of the Children's Reading Round Table, of which she is a former president, this writer asked her about her "pen pal."

"She wrote us that she and other mothers in her town, too, were building a library for their children, and we've continued a long correspondence about our mutual problems. They have enlarged their library to one for the whole community, and have their own building, community support with financing, and extra activities for both children, and

adults such as nature study clubs and village parties," Mrs. Stumbough said.

She detailed the struggles the women in her village (with a winter population of 300 and "tourist season" increase to 500) had in creating a library "with nothing at all to go on."

"We begged books loudly, frequently, distantly and successfully," she said. "They began to pour into the school, and we had no place to shelve them. We talked to other librarians, teaching ourselves how to shelve and index books as well as mend them. Then we asked the state librarian for help, and he sent us an assistant for a four-day workshop . . . We gave a house and garden tour in the summer to raise money . . . and raised \$350. At last we were able to ask the teachers what they needed, and go to Denver to buy them at a wholesale house. Half the people in town worked on that house and garden tour, and interest in the library widened.

"Many groups of Chicago friends helped, as well as individuals in the Children's Reading Round Table, the North Shore Alumnae branch of Theta Sigma Phi, various publishing houses, librarians, and the *Chicago Tribune*. Friends sent autographed copies of their own books . . . We opened the library in the summer to the children of the whole Ute Pass area, consisting of four villages where they had never before had access to a library closer than at the foot of the mountain—no real access at all, since there is no public transportation, and bike

Mrs. Sankey of Racine, Wisconsin, newspaper-woman and author, is a member of the Chicago Chapter of the Women's National Book Association.

rides can go only down, not up the mountain to get home again . . ."

She said the project is still growing, with the Ute Pass library for children and adults in its long-range plans, and continues to welcome contributions of books. (Box 113, Cascade, Colorado).

The Cascade and Australian village library projects were the topic of an informal discussion preceding a meeting of the Chicago chapter of the Woman's National Book Association.

One member said her daughter's family had moved out of Los Angeles to a coastal village to the north, and because of this vital handicap—no library or access to reading material—had given up their rural living and moved back to the city.

Another, a librarian, said home-grown libraries are apt to get undesirable books—the ones others throw out because they are outmoded or uninteresting.

A third said she knew of a group of eight women in a small Iowa village who cooperate in a book-club pool. Rather than eight women buying eight copies of the same book, they buy eight different books and circulate them. They have at least 28 books added to their "library" each year. Couldn't this idea be used with worthwhile children's books where they are unavailable through usual channels?

Mrs. Stumbough points out an important accomplishment in connection with Cascade's "boot-strap" library.

"The children were overjoyed with what they read, and the results showed up definitely on their county exams, with higher rating than other children their age in the county, the state, and the country."

The national president of the W.N.B.A., Anne J. Richter, had the pleasure of seeing one of the association's special projects in action in Nassau.

Children's books had been sent to the Ranfurly Out-Island Library, which, through the

activities of Sir Dudley and Lady Elizabeth Russell, supplies books to the many outlying islands of the Bahamas.

"Housed in a delightful 18th Century Bahamian house, next to the Nassau Public Library in the flower-filled park behind the Government Buildings, is the Ranfurly Out-Island Library, named in honor of a past Governor-General. Its neat shelves carry books in all categories, for both adults and children. A group of devoted volunteers works with the Russells in repairing the books, sorting them, packing them in strong wooden boxes, and sending them off to the out-islands for three months' sojourns. Schoolmasters and their students in remote outposts, planters on the islands, and other residents of the Bahamas enjoy these books—often their only source of reading material. The books are delivered by inter-island steamers and are eagerly awaited by their users.

"When they are returned, the children's books are carefully repaired and sent out again and again until they are literally in shreds. Even then they are not discarded. Every Saturday morning these tattered books are put in a box outside the library's door with a sign, 'Take One,' and the native children happily carry them home to read and share until there is nothing left of them," said Miss Richter.

Following up the Chicago discussion, Mrs. Thelma Shaw, teacher-writer, relayed William D. Boutwell's article, "Paper-Backs, the Best Invention Since the Sandwich," published in the October 1959 issue of the *NEA Journal*. Boutwell says "the average citizen has welcomed the paperback revolution with open arms and open pocketbook. But the paperback revolution hasn't won over everybody yet. Many librarians aren't quite sure what to do with paperback books. School executives and boards of education have not yet begun to use paperback books in any large numbers."

He cites as reasons that they feel books bought with public funds must give years of

service, and wary of the mysteries, westerns and accounts of bedroom escapades in paperbacks displayed on stands, wonder where the paperback books that could be used in schools are found? He says the question is answered in a semi-annual guide to 6,000 paperbacks "Paperbound Books in Print," (R. R. Bowker Co.)

"Books that teachers want for certain sub-

jects and for use in elementary and junior high-school grades are only now beginning to appear in paperback. But the future is bright," Bourwell pointed out.

Summing up, apparently a community, because it is too small for big-city library facilities, need no longer go book-less. The newcomer might well follow the question, "What, no Library?" with another—"Why not?"

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE (Continued from Page 260)

verb-object order has become the rule: *The boys love the girl*. If a speaker of English hears *The girl the boys love*, he does not react to it as a sentence, but perhaps as a subject to be followed by some such predicate as *is beautiful*.

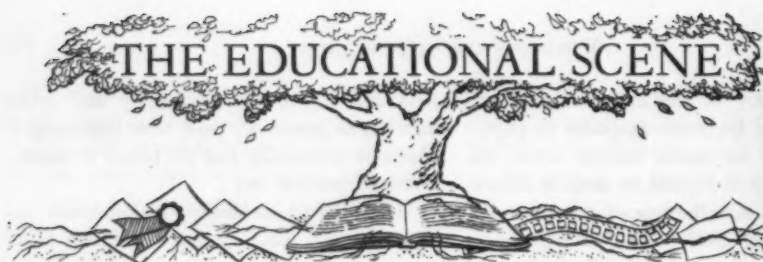
Going back to the sentence *Her principal*

anxiety was her children, we see that *anxiety* is in subject position and agrees with the verb *is*. That is all it takes to prove that *anxiety* is the subject. We may want to add that in this sentence the subject points out the thing that we intend to identify.

IDEA INVENTORY (Continued from Page 262)

Each working day members of the staff mark thousands of words for recording in the citation file. Printed matter owned by the company is marked directly on the page. Words recorded from borrowed books and magazines are listed on separate sheets. Some material is photostated. Some is typed on the 3x5 slips. This evidence shows how words are used in context, by whom, and when. Before writing a definition, an experienced Merriam editor receives from this file the accumulated evidence for the word he is going to define. With his knowledge and experience to enable him to weigh the evidence, he writes the definition, with his special talent as "a definer of words."

Webster's New International Dictionary, Second Edition appeared in June, 1934. In 1956 the company brought out *Webster's Elementary Dictionary* for children in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades, based on recorded usage of the words found in books and magazines for elementary school children. It has 18,000 vocabulary entries in large print, and 1,600 pictures, as well as special sections on teaching aids. Children who use this can be told about Noah Webster who believed, as do his heirs today, that the proper function of the dictionary maker is to record the language as it is used by the majority of its users, not to create it or legislate concerning it.



Edited by WILLIAM A. JENKINS¹



William A. Jenkins

National Library Week

"Limited horizons are dangerous to a free people. Reading and libraries are at the very heart of education and freedom-with-responsibility." With these thoughts in mind, local library committees throughout the land will recognize National Library Week, April 3-9.

In the words of the steering committee for the 1960 National Library Week, "Only a lifetime of continuing self-education through reading can keep Americans prepared to exercise responsible citizenship." These beliefs underlie one overriding conviction: we can not afford a nation of non-readers.

National Library Week is a movement to focus attention on the vital role of the printed word in our national endeavors. It is a time for all media of communication to join with librarians, teachers, and other civic-minded persons and groups in a coordinated effort to stimulate lifetime reading habits and to encourage the use and support of libraries of all kinds. This year the National Library Week committee expects the program to be observed in more than 5,000 communities throughout the fifty states. These programs will highlight the need for a "better-read, better-informed America," and they will encourage both individual and group action to bring action about these better habits.

National Library Week was inaugurated in 1958 under the auspices of the National Book Committee, a non-profit citizens organization devoted to the wider and wiser use of books. Instrumental in developing the program

have been the American Library Association and numerous national groups throughout the land.

That the efforts of the national Book Committee, the National Library Week committee, and all citizens' groups who have commemorated National Library Week have borne fruit is clearly shown in changes which have taken place in libraries throughout the land in the past year. Ten, even fifty per cent, increases in library circulation have been reported. A great many of the communities that took part in Library Week last year have undertaken long-range improvement plans for their libraries. More nebulous perhaps have been such things as increased awareness of the importance of libraries as community resources, citizens' support of and interest in libraries and library services, notable gains in the passage of library taxes or permissive legislation at general elections, and in budget and bond issues approved by governmental units. Along with these advances, there was an increase in reading activities in homes, schools, clubs, and businesses. Intensified efforts by schools and colleges and universities throughout the land, by local chapters of organizations of all kinds, have served and will continue to serve to make the nation a "better-informed America."

The elementary teacher especially may be interested in a new publication of the Children's Book Council, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, written by Dorothy Broderick. *Op-*

¹Dr. Jenkins is Professor of Elementary Education at the University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee.

portunities that Books Offer is an annotated bibliography which first appeared in the December issue of *Junior Libraries*. Copies may be ordered from the Council's office. The price is 15c each, reductions when ordered in quantities. The pamphlet is especially appropriate when the focus is on libraries.

* * * *

"BE INFORMED—KEEP PACE WITH PROGRESS—READ!" is the title of an 8½ x 11-inch pictorial preprint designed to publicize year-round observance of National Library Week. This preprint is available free to librarians for bulletin board or poster use. It visualizes the need for books to open wonderful new worlds to all members of the family. This page of illustrations, the work of Midwestern artist Ruth O. Belew, is preprinted from the 1960 *World Topics Year Book*. For copies, write to Mrs. Victoria S. Johnson, Director of Educational Research and Services, The United Educators, Inc., Tangley Oaks, Lake Bluff, Illinois.



A Public Service of the Tangley Oaks Educational Center, Lake Bluff, Ill. Copyright by United Educators, Inc.

* * * *

Without removing tongue from cheek, we shall like to pass on a memo written by Harry J. Skornia of the National Association of Educational Broadcasts which appeared in that group's News Letter for February, 1960. Mr. Skornia did not originate the slogans that we'd like to pass on, but rather borrowed them from the Catawba Synod representative at the 1959 board conference of the Presbyterian Church.

1. "Stop watering stumps." It is easy to persist stubbornly in attitudes and projects which are not productive. Let's have the courage to drop dead projects and develop new ones. (This is related to another recommendation made at the American Humanities Seminar at the University of Massachusetts that each organization needs a vice-president to promote revolution—or a minister of disruption—to keep groups from "just coasting" or following antiquated or anachronistic programs.)
2. "All Jim Dandies Must Go?" I think you can fill this in for yourself. It refers to either projects or persons. Are they of real value, or only flashy and possibly detrimental to more valid projects or directions?
3. "Move or make room!" For this one, too, you can find illustrations of your own. Are we (as individuals and organizations) doing all that we can to move forward and realize to the fullest that responsibility which is ours? Are you (or we) sure? Or are we being an "eight-ball" to someone or something?
4. "It isn't the size of the dog in the fight—It's the size of the fight in the dog (that counts)." The NAEB has had some experience in the "little dog" category. Are we acquitting ourselves with distinction in view of our resources? Are we using those human and other resources we have to the fullest—including the volunteer talent of the hundreds of members who seek nothing better than to make significant contributions to the advancement of education? What do *you* think of an organization or person that whines all day (to continue the dog analogy) instead of "moving" as rapidly as possible?
5. Hah!



The Good Old Days

Think you have it rough in your teaching position? Read the following statement which we have borrowed from *The American Teacher*.

Less than 100 years ago in New York City, a teacher caught getting shaved in a barber shop was suspected of "low intentions, integrity and honesty," but could win a 25 cent per week raise after four years if the school board approved. These and other school administration rules for teacher were enforced in New York in 1872:

- "1) Teachers each day will fill lamps, clean chimneys and clean wicks.
- "2) Each teacher will bring a bucket of water and a scuttle of coal for the day's session.
- "3) Make your pens carefully. You may whittle nibs for the individual tastes of the pupils.
- "4) Men teachers may take one evening a week for courting purposes, or two evenings a week if they attend church regularly.
- "5) After 10 hours in school, teachers should spend the remaining time reading the Bible or other good books.
- "6) Women teachers who marry or engage in unseemly conduct will be dismissed.
- "7) Each teacher who smokes, uses liquor in any form, frequents pool or public halls, or gets shaved in a barber shop, will give good reason to suspect his worth, intentions, integrity and honesty.
- "8) Each teacher should lay aside from each pay a goodly sum of his earnings for his benefit during his declining years so he will not become a burden on society.
- "9) The teacher who performs his labors faithfully and without fail for five years will be given an increase of 25 cents per week in his pay, providing the board of education approves."



The Children's Book World

"Open Wonderful New Worlds—Wake Up and Read" is the theme of this year's

National Library Week. The slogan indicates that reading is important to all of our citizens. Teachers might well bear in mind the importance of the formative years in developing a person who reads, who loves to read, and who makes certain he is always informed. Numerous studies available to each of us indicates, our critics to the contrary notwithstanding, that we are teaching our children and perhaps to a lesser extent our youth to read capably today and to love reading. Perhaps more crucial for many of us at the moment is the developing of youth during their transition period from adolescence to adulthood. Many authorities point to this period as the weakest among the developmental periods that our citizens pass through on the road to becoming informed reading adults. To aid us in this objective the Children's Book Council has available a special school kit which includes a booklet-reprint, "Activities for Youth in School and in the Community." The school kit is available for \$1 from the National Library Week Committee, 24 West 40th Street, New York 18. Other items in the kit include bookmarks, a poster, and a streamer highlighting National Library Week.

* * * *

"Reading Out Loud" is the name of a new television series produced by Westinghouse Broadcasting Company in cooperation with the American Library Association. Included on the program are twelve well-known people—Archibald MacLeish, Senator Kennedy, Jackie Robinson, to mention a few—who read a favorite story to children. The series began in January on radio stations in Baltimore, Boston, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, Cleveland, and a number of education stations throughout the country. The series is available to their stations and interested groups are invited to make arrangements through their local radio outlet.

* * * *

Books of the Year For Children—1959 is available from the Child Study Association of

America (9 East 89th Street, New York 28) for 25c a copy.

* * * *

Books for Brotherhood is available free on request, from the National Conference of Christians and Jews, Inc. (43 West 57th Street, New York 19).

* * * *

An award of \$100 will be granted to the author of the book published in 1959 that "best interprets for children the concept of 'One World' consistent with the ideals of the United Nations." The award will be given by the Brooklyn Community—Woodward School, Brooklyn, New York, the school's third annual award.

* * * *

"Must They Spoil Children's Books?" by J. C. Furnas appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post* for December 12, 1959. Among other things Mr. Furnas makes a plea against the watering down of children's classics by misguided editors. Teachers may not agree with all that Mr. Furnas has to say in the article, but many teachers will applaud his basic thesis and find the article interesting.



Magazines for boys and girls

On Monday, May 2, 1960, a unique list of youth magazines will be published. *The Dobler International List of Periodicals for Boys and Girls* offers information which has not heretofore been easily available. Nearly 200 magazines, with a readership conservatively estimated at 50,000,000, are listed with address of magazines, name of editor, year magazine began, circulation figures, age level, marketing requirements and payment, and if books are reviewed. There is also an index and bibliography. The periodicals are in four major groups—general, school, church and religious organizations, and foreign publications. The latter include those published both in English and in the language of the countries of their

origin. Miss Dobler has worked closely with UNESCO on this section.

As Librarian for Scholastic Magazines, Inc., Miss Dobler studies carefully the youth periodical market. The Scholastic library has one of the most complete collections of these magazines in the United States. The subject has had Miss Dobler's warm personal interest for fifteen years, as well as her extensive knowledge of the field.

The Dobler International List of Periodicals for Boys and Girls had an interesting beginning. In January, 1953, Miss Dobler addressed a conference of the Workshop on Literature and Language Arts, Metropolitan Association for Childhood Education in New York City. She prepared a mimeographed list and distributed it at the workshop. The response was so enthusiastic that Scholastic revised and reissued the list that spring. From year to year Miss Dobler has revised and enlarged the list, using it whenever she has spoken before groups. To date, a total of 15,000 copies have been distributed to librarians, teachers, editors, writers, parents, and others interested in youth periodicals. Letters praising the list have come from all over the country.

By 1959, *Scholastic* decided to discontinue this service, but since the demand has grown, a new and completely revised list is being printed, and will be published May 2. The price is \$2.00. Address: Muriel Fuller, Box 193, Grand Central Station, New York 17, N. Y.



New film

Sound Recording For Motion Pictures, a new instructional materials film produced by the Audio-Visual Center, Indiana University, is now available. The 10 minute, 16mm. production is designed to illustrate basic problems of recording sound and to suggest techniques for solving these problems. The film considers three basic problems of recording sound on a location not designed as a sound studio: (1) choice and placement of the microphone, (2)

acoustical treatment of the area, and (3) elimination of unwanted sounds.

Sound Recording For Motion Pictures depicts a soundman surveying a location to be used for recording and the elements he must consider before the crew is ready to record. Several situations are shown to illustrate microphone placement and the proper type of microphone for each situation.

The film demonstrates techniques used to treat acoustically a location to be used for sound recording, discusses the merits of various porous materials, and the elimination of unwanted sounds that might be picked up during the recording session. Emphasis is placed on physical properties that might cause excessive reverberation or unintelligibility.

With unwanted sounds eliminated, location acoustically treated, and microphone properly placed, the soundman is ready to make a quality sound recording. The situations and solutions suggested by the film are important to anyone wishing to make high quality recording, whether or not the sound recording is connected with motion picture production.

The film is available in both color and black and white. Prints may be purchased from the Audio-Visual Center, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana. The prices are \$100 for color and \$50 for black and white. Prints are also available for preview or rental.



Summer Workshops

The Fifth Annual Workshop in Language Arts will be held at the University of Chicago, August 19, 1960. The general theme will be "Developing Ability in Speaking." The Workshop is open to classroom teachers, supervisors, and administrators on the elementary and secondary levels. Registration in the Workshop is for one course credit (3 1/3 semester hours).

Additional information may be obtained from Miss Helen K. Smith, Director of the Workshop, 5835 Kimbark Avenue, Chicago 37, Illinois.

* * * *

The Eighth Annual Workshop in Reading is to be held at the University of Chicago, July 5—July 29, 1960. The Workshop is open to classroom teachers, reading consultants, supervisors, administrators, librarians, remedial teachers of reading, and to administrators and supervisors.

Registration in the Workshop is for one and one-half course credits (5 semester hours). For further information write to Mrs. Helen M. Robinson, Director of the Workshop, 5835 Kimbark Avenue, Chicago 37, Illinois.

* * * *

The Twenty-Third Annual Reading Conference will be held at the University of Chicago, June 28—July 1, 1960. The theme of the Conference is "Sequential Development of Reading Abilities." The opening session will bring out clearly the significance of sequence in teaching reading and then detail the major aspects of abilities in reading. Thereafter, successive half-days will be devoted to sequential development in: perceiving words, comprehension, thoughtful and critical reaction to what is read, assimilating and creating new meanings, reading abilities in content areas, and reading interests and tastes. The final session will emphasize the interrelatedness of various reading abilities.

The preliminary program may be secured about May 1 from Mrs. Helen M. Robinson, Conference Director, 5835 Kimbark Avenue, Chicago 37, Illinois.



New Standards for School Libraries

The spotlight was focused sharply on the vital liaison between the school library program and quality educational goals with the publication, March 1, of *Standards for School Library Programs*, (Chicago, American Library Association, 144 pp., \$2.50) published by the American Library Association. A companion work, *A Discussion Guide*, serves as an aid in planning and conducting meetings on some of the

fundamental aspects of effective school library programs and services.

The new national school library standards, the first to be set since 1945, are higher than regional and state ones, and will, for most schools, be goals to be attained over a period of several years. They give those persons concerned with school library service sound qualitative and quantitative criteria for improving libraries in terms of the significant changes that have taken place in American education in the past fifteen years. They point up the fact that the needs and challenges of education today demand an adequate school library program concerned with instruction, service, and activity throughout the school, and geared to the objectives of the school and the individual requirements of its students.

Nine pilot programs for standards implementation have been planned by the American Association of School Librarians, a division of the American Library Association, for March, April, and May, the first to be held at Ann Arbor, Michigan. Others will follow in Hawaii, Massachusetts, Montana, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, Virginia, Washington (state), and Washington, D. C. In some states, these programs will be conducted in cooperation with groups of school administrators, teachers, and curriculum and audio-visual personnel.

Replacing the 1945 *School Libraries For Today and Tomorrow*, the *Standards* is a product of several years of research, surveys, and suggestions by school librarians and representatives from 20 professional and lay organizations, among them the National School Boards Association and nine departments of the National Education Association, including several subject area ones and such groups as American Association of School Administrators, Department of Elementary School Principals, and National Association of Secondary School Principals. The project was financed by grants from the American Library Association

and the Carnegie Corporation of New York, and was spearheaded by an AASL committee with Frances Henne, School of Library Service, Columbia University, and Ruth Ersted, supervisor of school libraries, Minnesota State Department of Education, as co-chairmen.

Highlight chapters in the 144-page work include: "The School Library Program for Children and Young People," "Materials, Funds, and Staff Needed for School Library Programs," "The Library in the New School," "Library Resources and Services in Schools Having Fewer Than 200 Students," "Co-operative Planning for School Libraries," and chapters on school boards, administrators, and libraries; school library supervisors, and the school library staff. A selected bibliography, an appendix containing policies and specifications for library quarters and equipment, and an index are included.



Your Tax Dollar

"A teacher earning an annual salary of \$7,000 pays a Federal tax of approximately \$1,800. A breakdown of this item shows how the Federal government spends this money:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| 1) Military | \$882.00 |
| 2) Foreign aid, atomic energy and veterans | 293.00 |
| 3) Running government, transportation, public housing, et cetera | 256.00 |
| 4) Interest on public debt | 244.00 |
| 5) Farm subsidies | 114.00 |
| 6) Education | 11.00 |

Please understand that these are not precise figures, but they will give you a fairly accurate idea of where your money goes. What a shocking revelation! Out of an income tax payment of \$1,800, only \$11 is spent for education. Yet, on every hand, we are told 'education is our most important product.' "

Carl Megel, AFT President,
in *The American Teacher*



(Continued on Page 278)



Mabel F. Altstetter

BOOKS for Children

Edited by MABEL F. ALTSTETTER

Mabel F. Altstetter, Professor of English, Emeritus, Miami University (Ohio), lecturer and writer in the field of CHILDREN'S BOOKS AND READING; Editor, *Adventuring with Books*, 1956.

MARGARET MARY CLARK reviews books of science, social studies, and biography. Miss Clark is head of the Lewis Carroll Room, Cleveland Public Library, and a member of the committee for ADVENTURING WITH BOOKS (National Council of Teachers of English, 1956).

Easy Books and Picture Books

Chubby's First Year. Written and illustrated by Flavia Ga'g. Holt, 1960. \$1.95. (3-6)



A slight book that purports to help the very young child learn the calendar months as a kitten lives through experiences peculiar to each one. The verses are very mediocre but the illustrations are colorful and lively. A

Blue's Broken Heart. By Jean Merrill and Ronnie Solbert. Whittlesey, 1960. \$2.25. (4-8)

An appealing book with delightful pictures. Blue is a dog who goes to an animal doctor to have his broken heart mended when his friend dies. Dr. Thomas tied a large bandage around Blue and then let him help care for animals who were sick and hurt. In helping and in being needed by the doctor, Blue becomes well, a life lesson which children will be able to understand. A

Kap the Kappa. By Betty Jean Lipton. Illustrated by Eiichi Mitsu. Morrow, 1960. \$2.75. (4-8)

There is unusual charm about this tale of a Japanese kappa, or water elf, who had a shell like a turtle, webbed hands and feet like a frog, and a shallow bowl in the top of his head which had to be full of water if the kappa were to live. The adventures of Kap when caught by a fisherman and adopted by his family make up the narration. A well-known Japanese artist has made the ink wash drawings for the book. A

Benny's Flag. By Phyllis Krasilovsky. Illustrated by W. T. Mars. World, 1960. \$2.50. (6-9)

While living in Alaska, the author heard the story of the thirteen year old Indian boy, Benny Benson, whose design for a flag won the contest in 1926. The flag continues to be the official flag of the new state.

Benny loved the blue sky and the blue forget-me-nots of Alaska and he chose that blue for the background of his flag. On this he placed the Big



Margaret Mary Clark



Dipper and nearby the North Star which symbolized the most northerly part of the Union. This is a true story. A

Good Day, Which Way? Written and illustrated by Charlotte Steiner. Knopf, 1960. \$2.95. (3-6)



Any young child who has had trouble learning the difference between his right hand and his left will gleefully follow Little Rabbit through his troubles to a final solution. The pictures are full of fun and action. A

The Secret Hiding Place. Written and illustrated by Rainey Bennett. World, 1960. \$3.00. (4-8)

Little Hippo was the pet of the herd of nineteen, and the adults surrounded him constantly with their affectionate care. He longed for a secret place where he could be "alone but

not too much alone." His search for his secret place is rewarded after he has help from



many different animals. This is a gay book with delicate pictures. A

Noses are for Roses. By Phoebe Wilson Hoss. Illustrated in color by William A. McCaffery. Whittlesey, 1960. \$2.25. (4-8)



Young children will take this book to their hearts, for they will find themselves on every page as the author explores the uses of various parts of the body. Delightful twists of fancy lend a unique value to the book. The illustrations fit the narration exactly. A

Little Brother, No More. Written and illustrated by Robert Benton. Knopf, 1960. \$2.75. (4-7)

All children want identification, and they

will heartily sympathize with Little Brother who had no name of his own. He is very real as he searches for a name and his ultimate triumph brings satisfaction. A

Fiction

The Secret Pencil. By Patricia Ward. Random, 1960. \$2.95. (12 up)

A holiday in Wales brought Anna the delight of finding in a cave a silver pencil which had belonged to her great-grandfather. It proved to be a magic pencil which wrote without help. The reader accepts the secret of the pencil and is taken with Anna through a great many adventures. The story is fresh and well-written and it is filled with the warmth of good family relationships, development of character, and growth in understanding. The mystery and suspense carry the story at a rapid pace. A

River in the Dark. By Jean Speicer. Day, 1960. \$3.50. (10-12)

The publisher is making a real contribution to the field of children's books by a series of distinguished books that give information about our national parks. The vehicle chosen is a story involving people who live in or near the particular park. The writing is excellent and the story gives a feeling of participation which is convincing.

River in the Dark is concerned with Mammoth Cave in Kentucky. Drew Elliott is the central figure and through his eyes we see the fabulous underground rooms filled with stalactites and stalagmites, dark rivers, and endless chasms.

The Cave of Shouting Silence by Olive Burt is another in the same series. It deals with Zion National Park at a time when the Mormons were going to Utah to find a home. Again through the actions of a teen age boy the reader follows the band through hardships and heroism. The marvelous scenery of Zion National Park in Utah is clearly described. A

The House with Roots. By Barbara Willard. Watts, 1960. \$2.95. (8-12)

The setting of this story is a small village in Sussex, England. The real hero is a house named Prydes Plat which was to be torn down because a new highway was coming through the area. Because the Pryde family felt that their roots went deeply into the home they set about seeing what they could do to save it.

An interest in foreign racing cars contributes to the final solution. A motorist who knows a great deal about archeology is stranded at the house and his curiosity about the huge cellars under the house leads to the discovery that it is built on the site of an ancient abbey



Of course a road built over land honeycombed by tunnels and crypts will not be safe and so the house is saved.

The story is delightful and the family relationships and descriptions of the Sussex countryside make an appealing book. A

Miscellaneous

A Horn Book Sampler. Edited by Norma R. Fryett. Horn Book, Inc. 1959. \$5.00. Adult reference.

Some of the best articles of the past twenty-five years have been selected for a place in this excellent volume. The interest in children's books has increased in a quarter of a century and it is good to have these fine articles all in one volume. There is much about favorite authors of children's books and how the creative spirit in each came to produce the books and

others about the meaning of books in the lives of children as adults look back to their own youth.

The selection has been made with taste and discrimination and the book is truly a sampler of the best from an excellent magazine. A

Biography

Sandals on the Golden Highway: A Life of Junipero Serra. By Teri Martini. Illustrated by Nino Carbe. St. Anthony Guild Press. 1959. \$2.50. (10-14)



At the same time the American colonies were struggling for their freedom in the East, Father Junipero Serra and his little company were busy establishing missions along the west coast. The frail little Franciscan friar who willingly sacrificed a promising university career to serve the Indians in the new land, endured terrible hardships in carrying out his chosen career. His biography is written with warmth and sympathy and his mission activities are based on contemporary accounts. Format of the book is attractive with large print and many full page two tone drawings. Of particular interest to children in Catholic schools. C

John Colter: Man Who Found Yellowstone. By Mark Boesch. Putnam, 1959. \$3.00. (12-15)

"This is the biography of John Colter, the big soft-spoken Virginian who went to the West with Lewis and Clark and remained there to become a legend in his lifetime." One of the greatest of the mountain men, a hunter and trapper of extraordinary ability, he chose to make a solitary journey into the Yellowstone in the dead of winter, and saw for the first

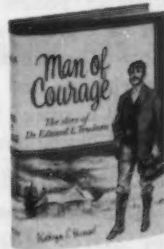
time its geysers and mud pots. Men of his day who admired his courage refused to accept his story of what lay in this unexplored territory.

Like other mountain men, he made both friends and enemies among the Indians, and one of his grimmest experiences was a race for his life against the speediest of the Black-foot warriors, armed with lances to destroy their white captive. A well sustained adventure filled biography vivid in its portrayal of the dangers and hardships of western exploration.

C

Man of Courage: The Story of Dr. Edward L. Trudeau. By Kathryn E. Harrod. Messner, 1959. \$2.95. (12-up)

"Edward Trudeau dedicated his life to fighting the most fearful disease of the nineteenth century—tuberculosis." A victim of the disease himself, his concern for others equally afflicted led him to found the first American tuberculosis sanatorium at Saranac Lake. This is excellent and substantial biography as it portrays a rather rootless young man discovering his purpose in life as he helped care for a beloved brother dying of tuberculosis. Between carrying on experiments and winning the co-operation of other medical men, and trying constantly to secure financial help to carry on his work, Trudeau's life was one of unselfish achievement. Though the biography might sug-



gest a depressing theme, instead there is so much vigor and action in the telling that it strikes a heroic and optimistic note. With the constantly increasing interest in medical research *Man of Courage* is a most welcome contribution.

C

Captain Cook: Pacific Explorer. By Ronald Syme. Illustrated by William Stobbs. Morrow, 1960. \$2.75. (9-12)

Captain James Cook was at the peak of his career as an explorer and surveyor in the Pacific when he died at the hands of mistrustful Hawaiians. The small farm boy of Northern England who made sea history, sailed to New Zealand, Australia, Tahiti and many of the Pacific Islands as an officer of the British Navy. He proved heroically able to cope with wary natives and hitherto uncharted lands and seas until his tragic end. William Stobbs' vigorous drawings in black-and-white add atmosphere and color to this newest compact biography in Ronald Symes' series on famous explorers.

C

Science

Moon Base. By William Nephew and Michael Chester. Illustrated by Walter Buehr. Putnam, 1959. \$2.75. (9-12)

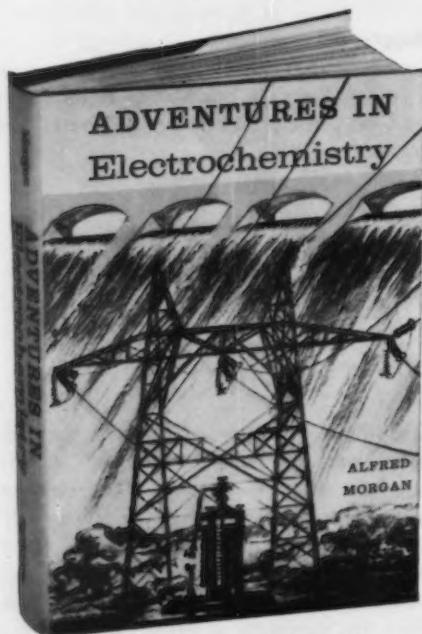
The authors of the popular *Moon Trip* write a fascinating account of the establishment of a moon base. Starting from present scientific knowledge of physical conditions on the moon, they describe in non-technical language the hazards of such an undertaking: the materials that will have to be brought in, and possibilities of using the moon base for launching flights to further planets. The book is quite realistic in its approach and emphasizes in concluding that "The future of the moon base depends on what we find on the planets and on what we find in space." Walter Buehr's handsome two color illustrations are in perfect harmony with the subject.

C

Adventures in Electrochemistry. Written and illustrated by Alfred Morgan. Scribner, 1959. \$3.50. (12 and up)

Originally published in 1940 as *Things A Boy Can Do With Electrochemistry*, this excellent revised title will have even more value and use in this day of the science project. Historic background and famous names in the

science of electrochemistry, and processes and products which have contributed to human comfort and welfare are clearly presented. Numerous illustrations and tables, and over forty experiments ranging from storage cells to electrolytic rectifiers and photoelectric cells



have complete diagrams and detailed directions. There is a most interesting chapter describing Niagara Falls as the first center of electrochemical industry, an idea which is often secondary to its fame as a scenic wonder.

C

Social Studies

Let's Visit West Africa. By John C. Caldwell. Illustrated. Day, 1959. \$2.95. (10-14)

The incredible complexities of West Africa become recognizable in view of a "population of more than 70,000,000 living in 22 political subdivisions. It is an area of 250 tribes speaking as many different languages." After an introduction to the land and people as a whole, the author organizes the countries as British

related, French related, Spanish and Portuguese colonies, and the independent republic of Liberia, describing the people of each, together with the history, geography, and economic present and future. The growing desire for independence and the many ways in which it is being achieved offer fascinating reading and an awareness of tremendous problems still to be solved. C

The True Book of Space. By Illa Podendorf. Illustrated by Robert Borja. Children's Press, 1959. \$2.00 (7-9)



In one of the most primary books on this in-demand subject, the author differentiates between the space all around us—with air in it—and the outer space where oxygen has to be provided for rocket travel and space travel of the future. Careful consideration is given to many of the problems still to be solved before man can travel and safely return from outer space. The wise selection of detail from an extremely complex subject gives this book value for the youngest, and the illustrations will have wide appeal. C

Man's Reach Into Space. By Roy A. Gallant. Illustrated by Lee J. Ames. Garden City, 1959. \$3.50 (11 and up)

"Throughout his flight experience man has not changed . . . But in today's age of flight man is being pushed to the upper limits of his

ability to perform." The tremendous developments in speed and in altitude of flight have put new tests on human endurance which modern science is trying to anticipate. What happens to the eyes, ears and heart under certain conditions, pressures from heat, noise and confinement, safer methods of bail-out are all problems of the medical and engineering scientists. And there will be even greater ones in the future as space flight progresses. *Man's Reach into Space* should have tremendous appeal and the pictures in color are as absorbing as the text. As well, there are many charts of altitude and speed records for manned flights, and diagrams relating to flight and physiological reactions of fliers under various stresses. Well indexed. C

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THE EDUCATIONAL SCENE

(Continued from Page 271)

Junior Literary Guild

Here are the titles of the April, 1960, Junior Literary Guild selections:

For boys and girls 5 and 6 years old

PEEP-LO by Jane Castle. Holiday House, \$2.50.

For boys and girls 7 and 8 years old

NOT A TEENY WEENY WINK by Richard Bennett. Doubleday, \$2.50.

For boys and girls 9, 10, and 11 years old

OUR FRIEND THE FOREST by Patricia Lauber. Doubleday, \$2.00.

For girls 12 to 16 years old

PLANTS THAT CHANGED THE WORLD by Bertha S. Dodge. Little, Brown, \$3.50.

For boys 12 to 16 years old

PICTURES TO LIVE WITH by Bryan Holme. Studio Publications, \$4.50.

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Martha Dallmann, Ohio Wesleyan University

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PART II—details the process of teaching reading from the earliest readiness stage through the primary and intermediate grades. Chapters are divided into A and B sections, the former stressing theory and the latter outlining specific practices.

PART III—draws the various strands together to show their operation in the school program as a whole.

February 1960, 500 pp., \$5.50 (probable)

The Exceptional Child: A Book of Readings

James F. Magary and John Eichorn, Indiana University

March 1960, 576 pages, \$5.00 (probable)

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Pictures by the author

*A PICTURE FOR HAROLD'S ROOM

By SYD HOFF

Pictures by the author

*OLIVER

DANNY AND THE DINOSAUR

SAMMY THE SEAL

JULIUS

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ELEMENTARY SECTION NOMINEES

The Nominating Committee of the Elementary Section presents the following nominations for members of the Section Committee and NCTE Directors, to be elected by mail in May. The Council Constitution provides that additional nominees may be placed on the ballot upon petition of fifteen members of the Section. This year's Nominating Committee, elected by the Section at the Pittsburgh convention, consists of: Fay Kirtland (Florida State University), Bertha Stephens (Denver, Colorado), and Myrtle Townsend (Westmont, New Jersey), chairman.

Elementary Section Committee

(two to be elected)

Miss Leta Arnold, Principal, Fairview School, Denver, Colorado.

Dr. Marie Hughes, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Miss Florence Bowden, New Jersey Helping Teacher, Cumberland County, Shiloh, New Jersey.

Dr. Miriam Wilt, Temple University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Elementary Section Representatives

on the Board of Directors (two to be elected)

Dr. Helen Painter, (Akron University, Akron, Ohio.

Mr. James Nicholas, Teacher, Park Hill School, Denver, Colorado.

Mrs. Dorothea W. Partch, New Jersey Helping Teacher, Camden County, Haddon Heights, New Jersey.

Mrs. Ethel B. Bridge, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey.

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- Composition
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DONALD R. HONZ

Director, Educational Stimuli, 1124 Belknap Street
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If you are planning to enter this year's examinations, please indicate below your number of entries for the various grade levels as we would like to know as soon as possible how many copies will have to be printed. You need not remit until you receive the tests. This will be sometime in March.

Nationwide Grammar—

4th ____ 5th ____ 6th ____ 7th ____ 8th ____ 9th ____ 10th ____ 11th ____ 12th ____ 13th ____

Total Number of Grammar Tests Desired _____ (at \$.10 each) Total \$ _____

Nationwide Spelling—

4th ____ 5th ____ 6th ____ 7th ____ 8th ____ 9th ____ 10th ____ 11th ____ 12th ____ 13th ____

Total Number of Spelling Tests Desired _____ (at \$.10 each) Total \$ _____

Nationwide Composition—

4th ____ 5th ____ 6th ____ 7th ____ 8th ____ 9th ____ 10th ____ 11th ____ 12th ____ 13th ____

Total Number of Composition Tests Desired _____ (at \$.10 each) Total \$ _____

Nationwide Vocabulary—

4th ____ 5th ____ 6th ____ 7th ____ 8th ____ 9th ____ 10th ____ 11th ____ 12th ____ 13th ____

Total Number of Vocabulary Tests Desired _____ (at \$.10 each) Total \$ _____

Nationwide Current Events—

4th ____ 5th ____ 6th ____ 7th ____ 8th ____ 9th ____ 10th ____ 11th ____ 12th ____ 13th ____

Total Number of Current Events Tests Desired _____ (at \$.10 each) Total \$ _____

Grand Total For Tests \$ _____

Please check the items listed below that you desire. Please do not remit until you receive your order.

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_____ Word List for Vocabulary Examination (\$.05)	_____	\$ _____
_____ Spelling List for Spelling Examination (\$.05)	_____	\$ _____
_____ Booklet of Previous Grammar Examinations (\$.35)	_____	\$ _____
_____ 1959 Spelling Examination (\$.05)	_____	\$ _____
_____ 1959 Composition Examination (\$.05)	_____	\$ _____
_____ 1959 Vocabulary Examination (\$.05)	_____	\$ _____
_____ 1959 Current Events Examination (\$.05)	_____	\$ _____
_____ 1957 Grammar Examination (\$.05)	_____	\$ _____
_____ 1958 Grammar Examination (\$.05)	_____	\$ _____
_____ 1959 Grammar Examination (\$.05)	_____	\$ _____

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Refer to the November issue of the ENGLISH JOURNAL for full details.

Refer to the November issue of the ENGLISH JOURNAL for full details.

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Indian girl hangs back when asked to model a bowl like the ones the Indian women used to make, but a summer of adventure shows her good reason for pride in her people.

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Johnson. Brandt, a fourteen-year-old lad in the rugged Alberta country, finds what a man must do when trouble comes to the ranch.

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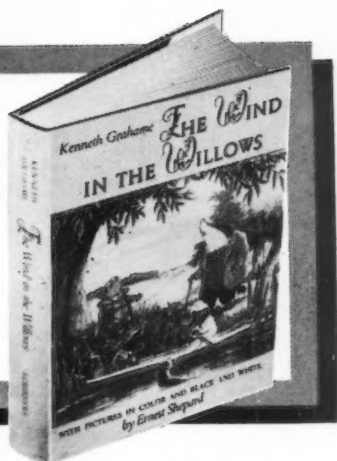
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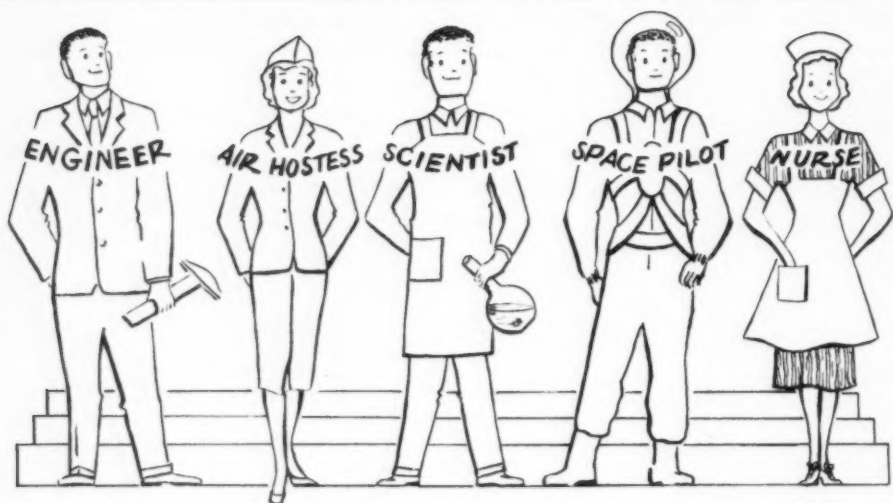
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